





# THE BERLIN DIARIES





Helmut Klotz

# THE BERLIN DIARIES

*The Private Journals of a General in the  
German War Ministry revealing the Secret  
Intrigue and Political Barratry of 1932-33*

Edited by  
DR. HELMUT KLOTZ

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## FOREWORD

A GERMAN War Office General, with whom during critical years I have been exchanging political views, surprised me, when I wrote to him several months ago, telling him of my exile, with the request to examine and to publish in whatever form seemed wisest to me his diary entries during the time from the fall of Dr. Brüning until the accession to power of Adolf Hitler : “. . . So that the world may not run blindly into the chaos which is bound to overwhelm it if the Brown usurpers have their way, but should know the real facts of the new German development, recognize its peculiar laws and the automatic nature of its progress.”

That was what he wrote. Conscious of the high responsibility I was taking upon myself towards him, as towards others, I spent long nights reading the General's notes, brooding over them and considering the possibilities of executing the task imposed upon me. For me, the decisive question was the following :

Could publication take place without any violation of political and historical accuracy, the preservation of which seemed to me an obligation of the highest importance, and, at the same time, without endangering the safety of the General himself and of his circle of friends ?

After mature consideration, and out of a sense of

duty towards the future of Germany, I accepted the task. I have not regretted that decision. On the contrary, the more deeply I have investigated the problem, the more clear and urgent rose before me the necessity of publishing frankly and ruthlessly all that is implicit in that unhappy chapter of German history.

The author of the Diaries did not transfer his political sympathies to the new Government. Simply in order not to lose the effective weapon of his high position, simply in order to remain able to co-operate on the spot in overcoming Hitlerism, not as a result of an inner change of conviction, he—externally—fulfils certain formalities which the Brown system now imposes on Germans of every grade. He, the General, has remained the same as he was before and as he has been known to me for so many years. That his name must remain concealed for the time being is obvious.

His Diaries provide the solid basis of the present book. Woven into them is a great number of official documents, of protocols, of letters and suggestions for letters, of other notes, as well as private information from persons with whom the General was connected by military, political, or purely human ties.

All these jottings and papers were not originally intended for publication, but were assembled day by day under the immediate pressure of personal experiences. They accordingly have a convincing quality, but are not free from the defects of all contemporary history.

My main task has consisted in organically fitting

this varied material into the General's Diaries, and, more especially, in concealing the identity of the author. This latter object has been achieved, in the first place, by assigning the actual experiences and observations of several (and equally important) persons to one person, and, in the second place, by altering the dates or localities of residents of minor importance.

The General has nevertheless exacted from me as my chief duty that I should do nothing to alter the sense of his notes or any of the documents, nothing to weaken or emphasize them unduly. The figures of the personages on "the other side" in particular were not to be altered in any detail. They have *not* been altered.

In the often drastic language used, no change has been made, except for a few unimportant exceptions : my endeavour has been not to weaken the original force of immediate experience and spontaneous criticism. Unimportant entries have been omitted, repetitions avoided. All observations of a military nature I have suppressed, except when I was expressly asked to make them public.

The Diaries do not shrink from telling the truth. And simply because they serve the cause of truth, they blow to pieces the flimsy fabric of the "Third Empire" and destroy the legend of the "seizure of power". With that they destroy also the nimbus of one who, for the sake of sordid interests, lent his hand to the criminal abominations of the Brown epoch.

With the General's agreement, I may warn the



reader against one possible error : the author of the Diaries is *not* the prototype of the German officer of high rank. In his political knowledge, in his appreciation of the laws of change, in his awareness of the needs of the masses, he stands alone. And equally in his courage in criticizing the acts even of men in high places.

Only in certain passages, chiefly in such of a military-political character, does he express the in-born prejudices of a German officer, and displays, in spite of himself, the Prussian spirit which otherwise he knows so well how to combat.

When I wrote to him saying that I would undertake the task he had laid upon me, he replied :

" . . . Go ahead with all the passion I know you are capable of, go ahead with all possible ardour, so that an end may be put to the madness of our new masters, *before* they can lift their hands to push Germany, Europe, and the whole world to destruction."

HELMUT KLOTZ

*Paris, 22nd September, 1933*

## HISTORICAL NOTE

ON March 13th, 1932, the first ballot of the Second German Presidential Elections was held. The returns were as follow :

	Votes
Field-Marshal von Hindenburg - -	18,661,736
Adolf Hitler - - - - -	11,338,571
Thälmann (Communist) - - - -	4,982,079
Colonel Dusterberg (Nationalist) -	2,557,876

Although Marshal von Hindenburg had secured so large a vote he had not the majority necessary for election on the first ballot, and a second ballot was, therefore, held on April 10th, the result of which was decided by a civil majority.

	Votes
In this ballot the Marshal received -	19,359,642
Adolf Hitler -	13,417,460
Thälmann - -	3,706,388

The Nazi vote had, therefore, increased by over 2,000,000 between the ballots. Within six weeks of having won the election for the President, Dr. Brüning was dismissed from the Chancellorship on May 31st and was succeeded by Herr von Papen, whose Cabinet consisted almost entirely of representatives of the Junker class, with General von Schleicher as Minister of Defence, Baron von Neurath as Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Count Schwerin von Krosigk as Finance Minister.

On July 20th there occurred the "Rape of Prussia", whereby Herr von Papen evicted the Socialist Government which had been in power since 1921 and inaugurated a Commissarial Government with himself as Reichskommissar and Herr Bracht as Minister of the Interior.

General Elections held on July 31st gave the Nazi Party 13,732,413 votes, representing 229 seats ; the Socialists 7,949,883 votes, representing 132 seats ; and the Communists 5,276,887 votes, representing 88 seats.

The Nazis had, therefore, gained more than 300,000 votes since the second Presidential ballot, the corresponding increase in the Communist vote being more than 2,000,000.

As a result of these elections, Herr Hitler was offered, on August 13th, a share in the Government with the Vice-Chancellorship, the Premiership of Prussia, the Reichs Ministry of the Interior, and two other portfolios, but he refused to accept these terms and demanded the Chancellorship and the conduct of the Government in every respect.

In further elections on November 6th the Nazis secured 11,700,000 votes, showing a drop of nearly 2,000,000 and a loss of 33 seats ; the Socialists obtained 7,200,000 votes ; and the Communists increased their votes to nearly 6,000,000, with 100 seats.

The November elections, though they resulted as had those of July in a stalemate, demonstrated, nevertheless, the united feeling of opposition amongst the German people towards Herr von Papen, who

resigned on December 4th, and was succeeded as Chancellor by General von Schleicher, who also retained the Ministry of Defence.

The life of the Schleicher Cabinet was of short duration. On January 4th, 1933, Herr von Papen and Adolf Hitler met at the house of Baron von Schroeder at Cologne and concluded a pact of alliance against the Chancellor. After three weeks of active negotiation and intrigue, General von Schleicher was dismissed on January 30th and Herr Hitler assumed power with Herr von Papen as Vice-Chancellor.

These are the salient facts in the story of which the details are recorded in the pages of the German General's Diaries which follow.



## INTRODUCTION

"SOMEBODY always tells."

No matter how skilful the lie, how systematic the propaganda, how carefully constructed the legend, political truth can almost never be definitely concealed. Neither censorship nor violence can, in last analysis, stop the mouths of men.

Nazi Germany is built upon a cornerstone of falsehood; not a day passes but that the Press is "instructed" by the Ministry of Propaganda. The Third Reich does not believe in "objective truth". Instead, it frankly admits its adherence to what might be called "vital myths". One of these myths is that Adolf Hitler took possession of the German Government by normal methods, with the consent of the people, in order to save the country from Communism. There was hardly a well-informed foreigner living in Germany during the "conquest" who believed anything of the kind. Their fault was rather that few of them went far enough in their disbelief.

This volume purports to be the true story of the betrayal of the German Republic by its chosen leaders. In the form of personal diaries that conceal a compilation, the supposed author reveals how the German democracy was done to death by a group of "gentlemen", who succeeded in corrupting the mind of the officials, sworn to defend the Constitution of

Weimar. It is a tale of unrelieved indecision, jealousy, cowardice, conspiracy, and simple corruption. The writers, of whose identity I am ignorant, are clearly insiders.

That the present German rulers will deny the story here given is both obvious and meaningless. After all, it was a Nazi official and personal friend of Hitler who first informed the United States by radio broadcast that "not a hair of a Jew's head is being touched" at a time when the terror was in full swing. Denials from a country where liberty, justice, and mercy have virtually ceased to exist carry little weight with free men. For those of us with first-hand information gathered on the spot of at least part of the events that brought about the downfall of the only self-government that the German people have ever known, will vouch for the fact that these authors seem to know what they are talking about.

Here is the familiar atmosphere just as it was when Hindenburg dismissed Chancellor Brüning by a piece of trickery and replaced him with Franz von Papen, German military attaché at Washington during the period of American neutrality. Here is the German people, corrupted to the soul by a lost war and a peace deemed intolerable. Since Germany would not accept the Peace Treaty as definite, armed force was necessary to overthrow it. Since such armaments were forbidden Germany by the Treaty, they must be re-acquired by stealth. With the result that German public life became poisoned with mendacity. Worse, since to win the coming "war of

liberation" was the highest national duty, inevitably the Germans succumbed to the idea that self-government, economic opportunity, personal freedom, general civilization, and universal ethics could profitably be sacrificed to the goal. In such a competition, he who could blow the loudest war trumpet and mouth the biggest promises was sure to win. Few men have ever blown so loud or promised so much as Adolf Hitler. Therefore, by the spring of 1932 Hitler had come to be a national menace that Hindenburg at first sought to ward off. It is at this point that our author—a supposed General—begins his account.

What his account reveals is absolutely shattering : an army divorced from the country, ready to co-operate with anybody beneficial to the "national defence". While the author clearly loathes Hitler, despises Papen, condemns Hindenburg, favours the social-democrats, yet he is as willing as the rest to stoop to any subterfuge, welcome any collaboration that seems useful to the great task of "freeing Germany".

What a picture ! The country bleats like a sheep : "Alone, unarmed and defenceless among these wicked wolves, who will save poor Germany ?" Tears trickle down its honest cheeks ! Sentimentalists and pro-Germans throughout the world are much moved. "Wicked, wicked France, horrid Poland, spiteful Little Entente, stop abusing our little lamb !" And what were the facts ?

A nation keyed to prepare the "war of liberation", as ruthless as ever in the calculated means.



Hitler's lieutenant, a fine figure of a man, calmly urging the German Army next time to attack France and Belgium by sweeping around the north end of the new fortification through Dutch Limburg : ministers and the highest officials enthusiastic about the scheme. Peace, neutrality, conventions ? 1914 again. To such men as these, disarmament means nothing but a better chance for Germany to become superior to the others, since equality, plus the legally forbidden arms, would guarantee the "military superiority of the Royal Prussian Republic of Germany". For what is the movement to end war if not the yaps of softies and sentimentalists ?

Nothing is more refreshing than our author's frank discussion of Germany's attitude towards its Treaty obligations. Here one may read of secret training for naval reserve officers ; of the 70,000 Steel Helmet members already (1932) ready for active service, and of the 60,000 more training ; of the eight-day aviation course in "dropping mail bags" for officer pilots. Inspiring, too, the description of the newly invented poison gas, "Red Cross", reputed "seventeen times as effective" as any gases known to Germany's enemies. The new German tanks, it is said, possess both ordinary and caterpillar wheels. Those produced by Lincke-Hoffmann in Breslau are, in the author's eyes, inferior to the product of the "Vomag" at Plauen. Poison gas factories at Bitterfeld, Dresden, Radebeul ; a trench-mortar factory at Eisenach ; a gas-dispersing instrument from Fuerstenwalde—all emerge to turn the legend of "disarmed and helpless Germany" into a

sardonic joke. Most interesting of all is the plan for a "bacteriological offensive" by which Germany might hope to win the coming war, an idea outlined by an employee of the Dye Trust, recommended by Hitler if utilized "unexpectedly and without declaration of war", but accepted by the honest writer only if it offers a hundred-to-one chance of victory—otherwise, he opines, "we should be done for in the eyes of the whole world and for all time".

Against this background of lachrymose pacifism and occult belligerency, there come and go the protagonists that filled the newspaper columns: ex-Chancellor Brüning, double-crossed and dropped, but bravely announcing his (purely academic) intention of fighting; General Kurt von Schleicher,<sup>1</sup> Germany's strong man, here reduced to his true dimensions as a boastful schemer, and double-crossed at his own game of intrigue by "Little Franz" von Papen, reputed a fool by most who knew him, who, through securing Hindenburg's confidence, knifed Schleicher, only in turn to be terrorized by the Nazis. Hitler himself emerges true to life, boastful, neurotic, and really timid, yet eloquent, incredibly energetic, a very Jew in his indifference to humiliation and rebuff, gradually flattering himself into the President's good graces. Hitler's friends are not very charitably described: Roehm,<sup>1</sup> the degenerate, the organizer; the activist, Goering; Goebbels, lame, radical, revengeful, intelligent, superbly effective on a platform, yet not above using his wits to seek a job under Papen; the present champion of German labour, Ley, here

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<sup>1</sup> Shot on June 30, 1934.

revealed as the agent of the German chemical industry ; Georg Bell, since murdered in Austria by German Nazis, at this time the powerful representative of the Dutch-British oil king, Deterding—all are here and many others, revealed, so to speak, from the inside. On the outskirts is General von Blomberg, whom we foreigners naïvely expected later to throw out Hitler in defence of the Weimar Republic. The fact is that for some reason Germany was handed to Adolf Hitler at the very moment Schleicher the well-meaning was hesitating on the verge of a *coup d'état* that might have saved Germany for Western civilization.

It is a story that can hardly leave us unmoved. Does it mean anything to a distracted world ? Yes, and again yes.

First, it casts light on the German people in the twilight of the Republic. Foreigners find it hard to believe how this nation, so likeable and so gifted, can yet be so indifferent to freedom and so fearful of responsibility. The Republicans were typical Germans—born to obey ; the Junkers, on the other hand, and the better Nazis as well, had the stuff to command. Therefore the millions turned from the rabbits and fell in behind Hitler the Drummer in the procession to the Third Empire.

Secondly, it shows how the Nazi movement in its origin was, in every respect save belligerency, more a conspiracy than a rational organization. In intent it was reactionary capitalist ; Thyssen and Schacht in Germany, Deterding and Kreuger abroad, were quick to exploit this fact. The idealist and socialist

young people who made the movement great were simply the dupes of a new pied piper—red and white in turn.

And finally, such a volume shows why Hitlerism is a threat to ordered civilization. If the Nazis could sweep millions (though never the absolute majority) off their feet, it was less with their offer to eliminate chain stores, Jews, objective science, internationalism, Marxian socialism and the human reason, hated though these were, than with their promises to arm Germany and tear off the fetters of Versailles. Psychological and material preparation for war inevitably became the crowning effort of such a régime.

"But," the reader may object, "admittedly freeing Germany from the disadvantages of the lost war was the inevitable aim of any German Government. Hitler, after all, is but following in the traces of his predecessors." Not so—at least, not exactly so. The aim is similar, the means utterly divergent. Both Stresemann and Brüning abhorred war and dreamed of a Germany restored to power within the new international framework that developed out of the war. To both of them Western Civilization was dear. Hitler and his associates esteem war as primitive men have always esteemed it. Somehow it seems to them identical with manliness. Furthermore, they despise internationalism and prefer to a civilization they cannot understand, an exclusive "racialism" that would subordinate all to Germans and their Nordic cousins. Their aim is territorial expansion, though they do their best to conceal this. In con-

temporary Europe such an aim can be realized only by fighting. Therefore, sooner or later, if he remains in power, Hitler must make war—provided the other nations do not, by combining, make the futility of war patent to him and his people.

A great nation is for the second time in half a century going astray. Perhaps this volume may do something to focus attention upon the possibilities inherent in its defection.

EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER.

*Translation of letter dated 3rd July, 1934, from Dr. Helmut Klotz to his Publishers.*

Dear Sirs,

I have just received your cable and hasten to inform you of the following :

The statement made once by the German broadcasting station on the late afternoon of the 30th June, 1934, but not since repeated, that the action against General von Schleicher was necessary "because Schleicher had delivered to a former German writer official material which gravely endangered German interests", is in this form quite inaccurate, in so far as it alludes to myself and *The Berlin Diaries*, which is evidently its intention. Further, the version issued by German circles in Paris that the action against Schleicher was inevitable because Schleicher had "demonstrably inspired *The Berlin Diaries*" has no basis in fact.

It is true that for years I was in close touch with General von Schleicher, but I have not seen or spoken to him since the 15th February, 1933, that is, about eighteen months ago. There is now no valid reason to dispute that General von Schleicher influenced to some extent specific parts of the Diaries, but his collaboration (if one can use the word) is limited to his having allowed me to see various material before the 15th February, 1933. Later on, he raised no objection to the plan of editing and publishing these and other matters.

But I regard it as important to state that the initiative for the publication of the Diaries did not come from General von Schleicher ; that it was not he, but a group of officers, and some of whom were opponents of Schleicher, who were my collaborators.

In view of the tragic death of General von Schleicher, it would be easy for me to put the responsibility upon his shoulders, but the duty of historic truth forbids me to take such a step, while political ethics impose a certain reserve upon me for the present in other directions.

I wrote you on the 10th May of this year that investigations had been opened against General von Schleicher and other officers in connection with the first publication of the Diaries (in Prague). I have just heard that the arrest of Colonel von Bredow on the 30th June, 1934, took place on account of the Diaries. (According to unconfirmed rumours Colonel von Bredow has been shot.) Colonel von Bredow was chief of the Ministerial Bureau of the Reichswehr-ministerium under von Schleicher. I wish to declare categorically that Colonel von Bredow had nothing to do with the Diaries, either directly or indirectly.

The present conditions in Germany forbid me to make any further declarations in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

HELMUT KLOTZ.

## PART ONE

*From the Fall of Dr. Brüning  
to the 31st July, 1932*





*30th May, 1932.*

Brüning has been dismissed to-day without warning. He has been in office for over two years. And only a few weeks ago, when Hindenburg was eager to be elected again,<sup>1</sup> the President declared in tones of deep conviction that Brüning was, and remained, the man in whom he put his "particular" trust. But to-day the Old Gentleman, who only returned yesterday (!) from the feudal atmosphere of Neudeck to the sober reality of Berlin, has "different" ideas from his Chancellor about German domestic policy.

I have never put much faith in Brüning's statesmanship. A trade union politician who harasses the workers and panders to the masters at their expense gives me a painful sensation. And Brüning's bourgeois solemnity has always alienated me, and did not exactly encourage my faith in his creative genius. So I never hoped much from his chancellorship ; but I think, all the same, that he deserved a different dismissal, a different end ! When he was no longer of use (although to get votes for Hindenburg, to win the election, he was thought good enough not so long ago !) then let him be dropped. But not in the way it happened to-day. A little more comradely feeling, Herr von Hindenburg ; a little more loyalty to your colleague ; or, if that's too much to expect, a little more dignity !

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<sup>1</sup> The results of the German elections from March 13, 1932, to November 6, 1933, are given on pages xi and xii.

What will happen next? Parliamentary Government is dead in any case. The united efforts of all the men in power since 1919, of Herr Hitler and the victors of Versailles, have succeeded in completing the work of destruction. A sinister "coalition", a still more sinister achievement!

Obviously a Government of the Right is being advocated, a Cabinet in which the Nazis will be given some form of responsibility so as to "wear them down", as the formula runs. The idea isn't a bad one, only the manœuvre should have been tried earlier! After the September poll in 1930, when 107 Hitlerites were returned to the Reichstag.

But the Social Democrats were scared to death of that; so as to "guard against" something worse they were tolerant, sickeningly tolerant, and slowly but surely dissipated what remained of their authority until their "policy" actually made inevitable the advent of Hitler. They quite openly admit this wretched strategy to-day, and don't even seem to feel anything approaching shame; *Vorwärts*, in its survey of Brüning's term of office, emphasizes with a complacency tinged with pride that the Socialists adopted their policy of toleration "with the express intention of preventing the Fascists from seizing power". These bloodless and impotent descendants of Bebel have a fine political instinct. One must say this of them, that they are going about their suicide with an obstinacy worthy of a better cause. Better draw a veil over it.

What will happen now? The Reichstag is unworkable. Till now Brüning has just managed to

keep going. But his successor? He will need a different majority, and it isn't there.

His successor? All sorts of rumours are going about. Schleicher prophesied weeks ago that Brüning would come a cropper; Hindenburg would put up no longer with his "Agrarian Bolshevism". (In the Palace, "Agrarian Bolshevism" is the term one uses when the State isn't disposed to pay the debts of bankrupt Junker land proprietors without asking questions.)

Schleicher added mysteriously that the new candidate would be Herr von Papen, an "Army man"—Schleicher seems to be right in his prophecy. But I can't imagine Papen as Chancellor. At the race-course or in the drawing-room, yes. But in high politics and especially now? After all, nobody knows what he will do; his *début* as attaché in America during the war was devastating enough. But all is not yet lost. Papen is not yet appointed.

I can't help thinking about Brüning. During his "lifetime" he left me completely indifferent. But now! That's probably simply because he has been treated so scurvily.

That reminds me of an incident. In March I was invited by Schleicher to meet old Admiral von Schröder.<sup>1</sup> Schleicher said during the evening that he was rather upset because the Blacks and the Socialists had adopted Hindenburg as their candidate. Schröder replied with a laugh: "Why, what more do you want? The Kaiser made him his Commander-in-Chief, and he let the Kaiser down. Ludendorff won

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly Commander of the Marine Corps in Flanders, 1914-1918. Died in 1932.

his battles for him and he let Ludendorff down. Ebert put him in a place of power and honour and he let Ebert down. The right-wingers made him President and he let the right-wingers down. Now the left-wingers are going to make him their President, and the very devil must be in it if he doesn't let them down too. The Old Gentleman is consistent in *that* respect." A rough diamond, Schröder. But I fancy he was right. Unpleasant, all the same, for us in particular, for incidentally Hindenburg is still head of the Army and wears our uniform !

*31st May, 1932.*

At midday Papen swore to the chief of his party, Kaas,<sup>1</sup> that in no case would he accept the office of Reichs Chancellor. A few hours later he had accepted it. "Imperial Chancellor!" Sounds well. Almost reminds one of Bismarck.

Schleicher is War Minister. He is terribly excited : he has rung up to tell me to come to him to-morrow. I'm as eager as a subaltern.

To put the lid on everything, there was a row to-day at the dismissal of the Marine guard, because of the Skagerak anniversary.<sup>2</sup> The Nazis behave as if they had lost the war all by themselves.

*1st June, 1932.*

An hour and a half with Schleicher. It's quite true; the new Cabinet has been standing saddled in

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Kaas, Prelate-Chairman of the Centre Party, 1920-1933.

<sup>2</sup> Battle of Skagerrak, May 31-June 1, 1916. (Otherwise known as the Battle of Jutland.)

the stable for months. Everything was arranged to the smallest detail. A long time even before the Presidential election. Poor Brüning!

It has all been very skilfully managed. But that doesn't lessen the scandal: the Old Gentleman sailed under Brüning's flag long after he had broken with him. "Reciprocal loyalty" he calls it. That has always been his strong point: the real Hohenzollern school!

Schleicher behaves as if in entering "his" Cabinet he were making the most prodigious sacrifice. He "only" accepted office to get a still firmer hold on the Reichswehr and make a still sharper line of cleavage between it and the Nazis. He intends making a whole number of changes in the command at the manœuvres; officers friendly to the Nazis are to be kept under observation.

For the rest: Hitler has pledged himself in black and white and on his "word of honour" to support the new Cabinet. As his price he demands the immediate dissolution of the Reichstag, the suspension of the present severe emergency measures, and the repeal of the prohibition against his Storm Troops. Papen has accepted these conditions and is convinced that Hitler will not break his word.

I have great doubts. What sort of impression will this business create at home and abroad? Two months ago the Storm Troops were disbanded and prohibited as "dangerous to the State", and now all at once these brown louts are supposed to be "defenders of the State"! When was the lie told? Two months ago, or now? . . . The only comfort

is that Hindenburg has had to put his own signature to this nonsense. That fox Schleicher declined with thanks, as he told me, grinning. He swore it was the Chancellor's business, or that of the Minister for Home Affairs, or the business of both of them ; not of the War Minister.

What Papen's other intentions are Schleicher doesn't know, or at least doesn't say. He seems to have his anxieties, the King-maker !

The day after to-morrow the "Herr Reichs Kanzler" will have the honour of dining in his palace with me and a few others. I feel curious.

But not too confident. The way has become too crooked for me. "National", that is called in the new German jargon.

*2nd June, 1932.*

Schleicher is in his element ! He has asked for immediate nominations for the post of military attaché at each of the greater Embassies. As far as possible Generals with the suitable qualifications, and at lowest, Colonels, are to be chosen, so that there may not be too great a disparity in rank between them and the Diplomats.

Here I support him enthusiastically. We'll have a new Foreign Office under our orders. These dolts in the Wilhelmstrasse, these feudal corps brothers of the false Prince Domela,<sup>1</sup> have heartily deserved having their teeth drawn at last.

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<sup>1</sup> Prince von Domela, a notorious swindler, passed himself off on high German society soon after the war.



PAUL VON BENECKENDORFF UND VON HINDENBURG  
President of the Reich





Otherwise nothing of importance, except that the Nazis are howling because Papen hasn't yet dissolved the Reichstag or raised the ban on the Storm Troops. These are the impatient creditors of the new Cabinet; one would do well to be prepared for all sorts of surprises.

*3rd June, 1932.*

This morning Hindenburg junior<sup>1</sup> arrived at my office suddenly and unannounced. A social call; he had just been seeing Schleicher and Hammerstein.<sup>2</sup> After he had accepted a cigar he departed again, jauntily puffing. He had no time for a talk: "Papa's waiting for me."

In the evening at Papen's. All highly elegant. Frau von Papen very dignified, very much "Frau Reichs Kanzler", almost Royal-Family. Something like a blend of Queen Luise (after the battle of Jena, of course) and the wife of the Great Elector, if he had one, got up for an admiring circle.

For the rest, a great crowd of people, each out for something or other and determined to out-bribe his rivals. The usual social picture, but far more brilliant than in Brüning's time. Far more vapid too, to make up for it. But Papen can afford it, of course; he stinks of money.

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<sup>1</sup> Colonel Oskar von Hindenburg, son and adjutant of the Field-Marshal. He was Squire of Neudeck, the estate presented by public subscription to the President, the deed of gift being made out in his name.

<sup>2</sup> General Baron von Hammerstein, Chief of Staff of the Reichswehr. A bitter opponent of the Nazis, he was relieved of his command on February 1, 1934.

I exchanged a few words with Goering,<sup>1</sup> whom I met for the first time. A disgusting swaggerer, behind whom there is nothing at all but bluff, brutality, and a certain gift for oratory; most pushing and importunate too. In spite of Papen, the fellows seem to feel very insecure and are eager to ally themselves with the Reichswehr at any price. Goering had the absurd idea of "detailing" a few Storm Troop officers for service in the summer manœuvres; I declined the proposal with thanks. If we should ever need any of these brown "soldiers" for our own purposes we'll take them ourselves. Without Herr Goering's permission!

4th June, 1932.

The Reichstag is dissolved! The "nation must decide unequivocally to what party it is to entrust its future".

That sounds very fine; but when one knows what is hidden behind these lying phrases, one may well feel anxious and fearful.

And Papen's programme as head of the Government! There's simply nothing to be said about it. We've sunk pretty low. Papen's very tone is a provocation. But it isn't only the manner, the matter

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<sup>1</sup> Hermann Goering had a gallant war record in the air force, having served in Baron von Richtofen's "Red Circus" and received the *Pour le Mérite* Cross. He became a comparatively early recruit to the Nazi Party, and quickly rose to be one of its prominent leaders. He took part in the Munich *Putsch* of 1923, and was elected President of the Reichstag in September and November 1932, and in March and November 1933. When Herr Hitler became Chancellor, Goering was appointed Minister-President of Prussia, Reichs Minister for Air and Prussian Minister of Interior. Later he became chief of the *Gestapo*, the Secret Police.

is execrable. The stupidest sergeant in the old Army had more social sense than the Reichs Chancellor has managed to display ; and yet he is rolling in money. All in all, the stalest and most lying rubbish that was ever served up to the German people. And the vulgar spite against Brüning—sickening !

Evening at Schleicher's. His wife as charming as ever, the food good, the wine excellent. All the same, it spoilt one's appetite to think of Papen. After dinner we retired to Schleicher's study. Without requiring any encouragement from me he began to talk of his plans, to which he obviously wishes to win me over.

Schleicher confirmed many things which I had only conjectured before, or for which I had had only more or less doubtful evidence. He is the man who for years has pulled the strings of German politics from behind the scenes, confused them, disentangled them, and confused them anew.

He confessed, and boasted of it, that he had made Herr Brüning and broken him, raised Herr Groener<sup>1</sup> to power and brought him down again. He does not know what sentimentality means. When anyone—even if it is his best friend, to whom he is bound by the deepest gratitude : Groener, for example !—seems to him of no more use, then he is

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<sup>1</sup> General Groener succeeded General von Ludendorff as First Quarter-master-General of the German Army in October 1918, and was largely responsible for the orderly return of the troops to Germany after the Armistice. He became Minister of Defence in Dr. Brüning's Cabinet in 1930, and later became Minister of Interior. He remained in that position until May 1932, when he was forced to resign the former post through the intrigues of General von Schleicher, who had persuaded the President that Groener no longer enjoyed the confidence of the Army. He retained the Ministry of Interior until the fall of the Cabinet a few weeks later.

coldly flung aside. "Political morality" has nothing to do with "human morality", he said, smiling with almost contemptuous pity at my objections.

With Papen, who is his creature and (so he flatters himself at any rate) will always remain so, he fancies he has brought off his grand *coup*, his master-stroke. Schleicher means to put an end to the domination of the soldiers ; but bayonets, he said with a sly grin, are somewhat ticklish things. Consequently he is going to "mine" his way towards his goal. His tool for this purpose is Franz von Papen.

Papen is to effect a synthesis for him between the Christian National trade unions (he no longer counts the free Social Democratic unions as a power factor ; he is of the opinion that these died long ago of softening of the bones, only they haven't realized it yet) and the National Socialist masses. In this combination he intends to be Number One, throned above the clouds, but the real ruler ; Brüning and Stegerwald<sup>1</sup> are his Number Two, and Hitler, the "drummer" with a share in the business, the third.

Papen is to be the confidential agent. In his heart he isn't taken in by the rare qualities of that gentleman ; he estimates him rightly, that is, as of very little worth. He thinks, however, that Papen can be led, and he wants to exploit old Hindenburg's friendship for Papen.

But, above all, Papen is a Catholic and a Conservative in one, and has relations and relations-in-

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Stegerwald was Minister of Labour in the Brüning Cabinet and, with the Chancellor, represented the trade unions in the Minority.

law in big business. The Centre Party<sup>1</sup> will make no move against the Catholic, the Conservative is *persona grata* with Hugenberg,<sup>2</sup> and the gentleman jockey (Papen once tried his luck in that line too, not without success) will win the sympathy of the officers.

And Herr Hitler will think of his consumptive money-bags and scarcely venture to attempt any stupid tricks with the friend of his financial backers.

The meaning in brief of Schleicher's long harangue was, then, that he wishes to tie the Nazis' hands by means of a forced marriage between them and the Centre Party and Hugenberg. He reckons, almost with confidence, on the neutrality of the Social Democrats. But that seems to me a much too risky speculation. I credit the leaders of the "Left", it is true, with the maximum of characterlessness and ineffectuality (which they call "statesmanship"), but surely not that? These people have done more than enough already, God knows, to fritter away their political influence and their last shreds of public respect. I said so frankly to Schleicher; he thinks my fears are exaggerated. In any case, things would go on now without the Social Democrats, whose day was irretrievably gone.

One thing is clear: Schleicher is resolved to keep the Nazis from attaining power. The Old

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<sup>1</sup> The Centre Party was the organized political party of German Catholicism, exclusive of Bavaria and the Christian Trade Unions. It was dissolved in July 1933.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Alfred Hugenberg, a Privy Councillor and leader of the Nationalist Party. He was a newspaper proprietor of great wealth and controlled the "Ufa" film syndicate. In the Hitler Cabinet he held the Reich and Prussian portfolios of Economics and Agriculture, but resigned in July 1933.

Gentleman, too, is of this mind. Under Hitler's régime the dominating influence of the soldiers would be broken—the awful example of Italy proves that. As it is, the Nazi ranks are absolutely swarming with out-of-work Generals and other officers.

In any case, the position is damned serious. We must keep our eyes wide open if we aren't to get a knock on the head.

I don't envy Schleicher the stake he's playing for. Will he bring it off? He's considered clever; but it's all too easy for a Prussian General to incur the suspicion of being clever. For sheer lack of competition.

*5th June, 1932.*

Schleicher's plan for using Papen sounds quite convincing. But I have my own thoughts about it. To conduct politics with military arguments—will that prove enough by itself? Certainly I could wish that lots of so-called politicians had a slight infusion of the military spirit; but hardly as Schleicher likes to conceive it.

While out riding this morning I met my former chief, who, in spite of his fall, still regards me with good-will. We only spoke for a few minutes; to my surprise he knew all about Schleicher's plans. He implored me to warn him: the support of the Centre Party could not be counted on in any circumstances. They hadn't forgotten that in the Prussian Landtag Papen had voted for years with the Right Wing against his own party. The fact that the versatile Papen was incidentally "a renegade Centre

man" would put a spoke in our wheel, so he said. And he added that the Centre Party could be more easily induced to tolerate a free-thinker than a Catholic who had violated the authority of the sacred party machine.

I did all I could to defend the policy of my Minister. But, as I myself did not believe in it, my arguments could not have sounded very convincing. The most uncertain factor in the whole calculation is obviously Papen, that unfortunate mixture of arrogance, dilettantism, and the gambling instinct. Modified (if one can use the term) solely by the ludicrous farcicality of his type.

During the middle of the day with Schleicher and Hammerstein in Döberitz.<sup>1</sup> Strained feelings seem to exist between the two of them. I travelled back with Schleicher, and reported my conversation with ——— to him. He refused to give up his optimism. He was rather set to-day on discovering my own views. I was not sparing of my doubts.

He said he was going to the Herren Club<sup>2</sup> in the evening, and invited me to accompany him. At first I excused myself; but then, as he was urgent, I accepted. It was only due to my chief.

6th June, 1932.

Yesterday evening with Schleicher at the Herren

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<sup>1</sup> Döberitz is a large military training ground just outside Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> The Herren Club of Berlin was the most important of the Ring of German Gentlemen's Clubs—*Deutschen Herren Gesellschaften*—which, although originally purely social in its interests, had gradually become a basis for reactionary operations and intrigue. The plot to oust Brüning was hatched in the Herren Club, and all the leading men of the Papen and Schleicher Cabinets were drawn from its members.



Club. When we came away it was too late to write my impressions, so I am doing it now.

I had heard a great deal about this select club, but never been inside it. So the experience was not without its charm and not uninteresting. Papen is a member of the committee of the club ; Schleicher does not belong to it, but to another one which has a friendly understanding with it. On the other hand, Schleicher sets the tone of the "executive committee" of the National Clubs ; the "executive committee", that is the secret oligarchy of some seventy clubs which have sprouted up in all the important centres in Prussia, and in which the members of the upper ten are organized. In other words ; a full-blown conspiracy.

Lots of fantastic romancing, all very nice. Whether these people can act as well as talk has still to be shown. In any case they're "gentlemen" at the gaming-table ; they put down huge stakes with the greatest unconcern, and lost or won, as the case might be. Not exactly the best environment for serious political work. Schleicher begged me to come here regularly in the evenings. One can't become a member ; things aren't done in that way. But after being introduced by him I could come every evening with an easy mind. He himself, being in the Cabinet, wished to preserve a certain distance.

So I am to go there as his representative, in a sense, to observe everything and if possible exert my influence. There was little choice left for me but to say yes. Besides, my curiosity is agog.

I had a long conversation with Meissner,<sup>1</sup> who seems to play a controlling part in the club. He was furious about his chief, who, since his return from Neudeck, has once more ceased to be of any use for serious political work. Meissner wanted Hindenburg to receive Braun,<sup>2</sup> the Prussian Premier, on some important affair; but the Old Gentleman declined. He had no desire to see "that Social Democratic propagandist and editor". Incidentally, "that Social Democratic propagandist and editor" won the people's votes for him, with Brüning's help, only a few months ago, and discredited himself in the eyes of several millions of his supporters for the old boy's sake.

This horrible atmosphere that broods over our pleasant Germany! Social sympathies and antipathies have become more weighty nowadays than sober reason and necessity. How is all this to end? Meissner does not see the political situation too rosiely. Hitler, it's true, has pledged his solemn word of honour to support the Papen Cabinet, but Meissner is convinced that Hitler will break his word of honour just as solemnly as he gave it, or, rather, as he almost forced it upon the Old Gentleman.

To-day nothing of consequence. The Nazis are

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Meissner has held the office of Secretary of State to the President of the Reich since 1920, and did much under Herr Ebert and during Marshal von Hindenburg's first term of office to define the powers of the President, which had been left very vague by the Weimar Constitution. He later came under the influence of General Schleicher and Colonel von Hindenburg, with whom he formed the Palace Camarilla.

<sup>2</sup> Otto Braun, a leading Socialist, was Minister-President of Prussia from 1921 till his forcible eviction by Herr von Papen in the course of the "Rape of Prussia", July 20, 1933.

furious because the ban on the Storm Troops hasn't been raised yet.

*7th June, 1932.*

To-day I read (and in a Social Democratic paper too) a brilliant article on the question of "The Army and Fascism". The sub-title ran : "What have the Services to expect from Hitler ?"

The author understands his job ; I should guess some officer had a hand in it. Taking the example of Italy, he proves with convincing logic what a devastating transformation comes over the army when a party dictatorship comes into power. That is, the dictatorship of a civilian party, such as they have in Italy and such as Hitler would give us.

A Hitler would make permanent the cleavage between the Army and the people if he were allowed free play. It alarms one to follow the almost irrefutable line of reasoning of the author. One wants to contradict him ; and yet one sees that he is right ; that all the rest is mere phrases, self-betrayal, lies. This terrible cleavage between the Army and the people has ruled and has corrupted the whole development of German statesmanship. This cleavage was at the root of the Thirty Years War. In the World War Germany went to pieces because of this cleavage. The man who abolishes it, he, and he alone, will possess Germany.

Is it necessary for us to wait for the onset of the Communistic era before overcoming and curing this German malady ?

I want to write about this question during the next few days, when I have more time. For to-day I must content myself with the following :

Anyone who has followed my military policy for the last ten years—indeed, even during the war and before the war—must know how hard I have fought for this very unity between the Army and the people that the Socialist writer demands. He must know too, however, that it was our friends, the Social Democrats, who made the stoutest resistance to my plans, and sabotaged them. Can one hope now that a swing in the other direction is about to happen in the Red camp ? That such an article can appear in the Social Democratic Press, and in radical Saxony at that, is surprising and may be symptomatic. I'm afraid, all the same, that these gentry are still too fossilized and too cowardly to risk a change of front. And then, they're afraid of the criticism of the Communists, who, in this matter, are incomparably more intelligent.

To the Social Democratic party machine the Reichswehr is, of course, the stronghold of reaction. It is true the Reichswehr is not social democratic. Yet that we have never set our wills stubbornly against Social Democracy, or, more correctly, a real and consistent Socialism, but on the contrary have actually desired the latter, no one will gainsay who knows the circumstances. And that one can be anti-Social Democratic without being a reactionary is also so obvious that it requires no proof. Besides, we are anti-Social Democratic because we are, in the truest sense, Socialistic ; and we have become

anti-Social Democratic because we have seen the feats of Herr Wels<sup>1</sup> and Herr Hilferding<sup>2</sup> with our own eyes, these tragedies of cowardice and treachery to their own programme. Had they made a bid for supreme power (and the Army is needed for that !) we should have supported them enthusiastically. But they were afraid of power, afraid of responsibility, afraid of their own programme. That they could not win any sympathy, far less comrades-in-arms, by such means, they might have known themselves. Consequently it follows : if the Reichswehr stands solid against the Social Democracy of to-day it is simply and solely the fault of Social Democracy itself.

I am eager to see what Schleicher has to say about the article.

In Prussia all sorts of things are brewing. Papen seems to have the intention of starving out the fortress, so as to take it finally with a single blow. He will find himself mistaken. I have no superlative opinion of the Socialists, but that Severing will capitulate is out of the question.

*8th June, 1932.*

There really are some noble specimens among the upper ten ! They live by intrigue. And if intrigue were a deadly disease, then East Prussia would soon be ripe for colonization ! Not a man would be left alive

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<sup>1</sup> Otto Wels was chief of the Social Democratic Party. With the Socialist leaders he was proscribed after the Nazi Revolution and deprived of his German nationality.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Rudolf Hilferding was also a leader of the Social Democratic Party in the Reichstag. He was Reichsminister of Finance in the Muller Cabinet of 1920.

in the next few weeks. And the highest death-rate would be round about Neudeck, among the Old Gentleman's neighbours.

To come to the point: "X" has been to see me to-day. After the obligatory preamble he told me (strictly in confidence, of course), of the discreditable ramp in Neudeck. "Perhaps the Herr General will be so good as to bring the matter discreetly to the attention of the Minister for War." "X" insisted again and again that "he, of course, spoke and acted simply and solely in the interest of the Field Marshal" (people of his kidney can't sully their feudal tongues by acknowledging that the Old Gentleman is incidentally, in his civil capacity, President of the country. That savours too much of the Republic.)

I can easily imagine how much the "interest" and neighbourly love of "X" amounts to; he had no need to indulge in such filthy disingenuousness for my sake. He might have known himself that I, after being condemned for a lifetime to work with East Prussian Junkers, wouldn't be taken in by his bluff.

Well, the large land proprietors decided to present to the Old Gentleman on his eightieth birthday the ancestral Hindenburg estate of Neudeck—at the cost of the large industrial firms. This bog belonged to the Hindenburgs for generations, that is, to the main line, to which our Hindenburg does not belong. A more or less bankrupt concern, small in area, wretched soil, sunk in debt and anything but handsome or suited to a gentleman's position. The main line of the family occupied the "Castle"; poor relations,

among them the Old Gentleman, were allowed quarters in the side-wings.

About the progress of the affair "X" related the following : Soon after the first election of Hindenburg as President, when the Old Gentleman seemed about to be drawn into the Centre Party's sphere of influence, when "industrial politics" was supplementing "agrarian politics", the leader of the landed proprietors made the proposal that the old boy should be invested with a manorial estate. That would be the surest way of making him see reason. A transaction like that would, of course, cost money, but the money would be well and safely invested and bring in higher interest from year to year.

His friends were delighted with the idea, even if at the beginning they treated it as a joke. Then he went on to say that the estate must be as bad as possible, with barren soil, and sunk in debt to the very roofs, so that the "recipient" might learn the joys of the estate proprietor from the negative side. It would be best if they could manage to plant the Old Gentleman in the same neighbourhood as themselves ; then they would have the whip-hand.

That was the first time the name Neudeck came up. "X" went on to say that for many years the project had been allowed to sleep. The business was no longer urgent. The land proprietors' affairs were going well after they had swindled their creditors by means of the inflation. Then they started to borrow anew. But a day came when they could no longer find anyone to lend ; the agricultural crisis in East Prussia grew acute ; they remembered their leader's

project again. In a few weeks the idea was ready to be put into execution. He himself undertook to make a begging round of the industrial magnates, and soon the money was got together.

And with this levy the land proprietors purchased the ancestral estate of Neudeck. But along with Neudeck they bought the old boy.

To use him against the industrial magnates—that was a matter of course.

The estate (the original disadvantages of which as a profitable concern had, of course, been artificially enhanced meanwhile), was given not to the Old Gentleman, but to his son Oskar. This proceeding was tactfully justified by hinting at the great age of the President.

When he had finished, I asked him what object he thought to effect by telling me this. And he had the cheek to tell me in so many words: "To make it clear to you and the War Minister that we can count with absolute certainty on Hindenburg." As I remained silent, he added that they "could bring this strongest of all arguments to bear on the President at any time, and would do so at need!"

Very soon after that I dismissed him somewhat coldly. I imagine "X" regards me as a frightful stick-in-the-mud. Faugh! And the German people are more or less delivered into the hands of such creatures! People like that decide the course of politics in Germany to-day.

I went to see Schleicher immediately and reported the matter to him, as I was, of course, bound to do. Schleicher was deeply enraged and thumped his fist



on the table several times. "Scoundrels" and "blackguards" were his mildest expressions for the noble Junkers. He asked me to give him a detailed written report. He wanted it so as to hand it to the old boy at the first suitable opportunity. I warned him against any such course. "X" would deny everything, as was only due to his aristocratic style and traditions ; and Hindenburg would put more trust in the word of his next-door neighbour in the country than in that of his Minister for War. Schleicher answered despairingly that he could, of course, let the matter drop for a while. In any case he would consider it again.

I've never seen him so cut up before ! It's a horrible thought that one has to deal on level terms with such corrupt creatures.

These idiots of November 1918 ! Why didn't they hang the whole crew of these people ? They had the power, but they hadn't the pluck. Afraid of their own revolution.

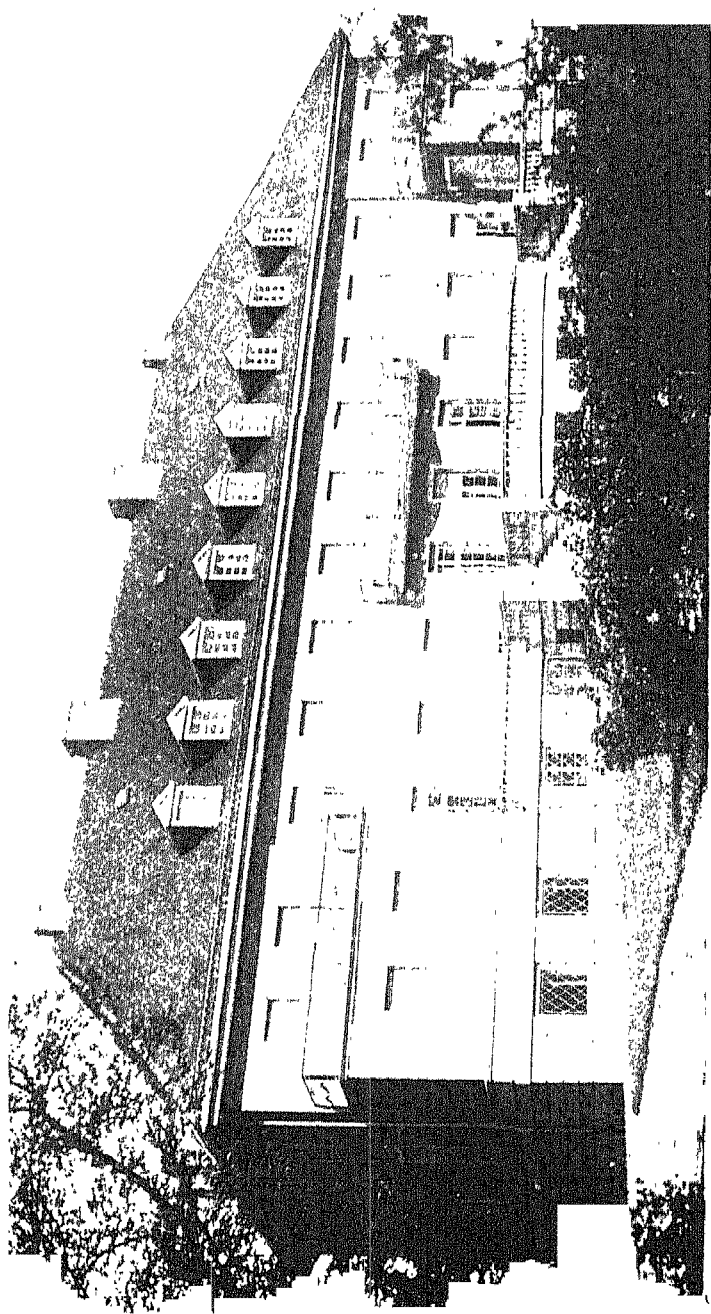
A crime of omission by the Socialists which should be punished by the death penalty.

To-morrow I am to meet Brüning. I am curious to find out whether he'll let out anything about his dismissal. People are saying all sorts of things.

*9th June, 1932.*

Schleicher sent for me. The article on the Army and Fascism interested him keenly. He was particularly struck with the moral drawn at the end :

"The law of self-preservation demands from the



NEUDECK. THE MANOR HOUSE



Reichswehr and its officers a pitiless war on Hitlerism. The same law demands also the unconditional fidelity of the Reichswehr to the democratic Republic." The author is only too right ; though one could wish that this "democratic Republic" had a little more backbone. Schleicher will try to find out the name of the author so as to get in touch with him. Yet one more chance for us and for the Social Democrats.

Afterwards to see Brüning. I am all agog.

Five hours later. My conversation with Brüning was extraordinarily interesting. The former Chancellor is quite transfigured ; his solemn, almost wearisome deliberation has given place to a gratifying energy. He has no intention, he told me at the very beginning, to take everything lying down ; he considers the new policy and the new rulers to be a dangerous experiment which must fail, and for whose failure the German people and the whole world will have to pay. Consequently he is resolved to fight (it is to be hoped that he will stick to his decision).

Above all, he considered it important that the public should know the truth about his dismissal ; and it was solely for this reason that he had summoned me to him. He knew me to be a right-thinking man, etc. I could make whatever use seemed good to me of the information he gave me.

He drew a memorandum from his pocket and began. On Sunday, the 29th May, Brüning paid a visit to the President of the Republic, who had just returned from Neudeck, and outlined to him the main heads of the proposed emergency legislation. In the middle of his explanation Hindenburg flung

out the question : "I have been told that a Bolshevist land-settlement plan is part of your programme. What about that ?" Brüning did not enter into this question, but went on with his statement. When he came to the financial aspects of his programme, Hindenburg once more interrupted him : "So financial questions come in too ? I'm afraid there's Bolshevism at the back of all this !" Brüning did not go into that objection either—an objection suggested to the President by irresponsible persons. The Chancellor once more tried to continue, but Hindenburg stopped him brusquely : "No, no, my dear Herr Chancellor, this sort of thing will never do. Bolshevistic wage regulations and Bolshevistic settlement plans we can't countenance. The two trade union representatives will have to leave the Government !"

When Brüning looked up in great astonishment, Hindenburg went on quite calmly : "By that I mean you and Stegerwald. But, of course, there's no reason why you shouldn't be Foreign Minister in another Cabinet." Thereupon Brüning retorted sharply : "Thanks, your Excellency. But I refuse to remain in office with my hands tied !" Hindenburg had obviously not been prepared for this development. Somewhat awkwardly and uncertainly he said : "And what would you say if we had a talk as officer to officer ?" Brüning replied : "This is no longer a matter of sentiment. Things have gone much too far and, above all, have become far too critical for that. Besides, it seems to me that you no longer consider it my business to point out to you the dangers that are bound to follow on the course you contemplate.

The Opposition has evidently supplied you with all the advice you need." To this Hindenburg could find no answer, and Brüning coldly took his leave.

In the afternoon he called together his Ministers and informed them of his interview with Hindenburg. Treviranus<sup>1</sup> tried to persuade Brüning to make another attempt to come to an understanding with Hindenburg; but Brüning refused. "It would be of no use. Our relations are finally severed."

On Monday, the 30th May, the Chancellor handed the President the formal resignation of the whole Cabinet. Everything was over within three minutes. Brüning handed over his resignation with the following words: "I give you herewith, Herr President, our formal resignation. It is exactly seven weeks since your re-election!" Hindenburg did not say a word in reply; at the mention of the Presidential election his face grew pale for a moment. Brüning retired without having given the President his hand.

Immediately afterwards he went to Meissner, the Secretary of State, and expressed in the most energetic terms his refusal to accept any formal vote of thanks.

That was how it happened. I must frankly say that I am ashamed for Hindenburg. I had not considered him capable of such contemptible conduct. And a man like that is President of the Republic, thanks to the feebleness of the Social Democrats and the Christian Trade Unions.

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<sup>1</sup> Herr Treviranus was originally a naval officer and served as such throughout the War. He entered the Reichstag as a Nationalist, but soon revolted against the dictatorship of Dr. Hugenberg in party affairs. In the election of 1930 he formed one of the "Splinter Parties" and attached himself, with his few followers, to the leadership of Dr. Brüning, of whom he was a close friend and in whose Cabinet he held the portfolio of Economic

<sup>A ff</sup> irs.

Another scandalous business: Braun, the Prime Minister of Prussia, has made himself scarce. He has retired for a long holiday for "reasons of health"; his deputy is Hirtsiefer.<sup>1</sup> On the battlefield that would have been called desertion in face of the enemy. And the Social Democratic Party is silent; its members seem to consider it quite normal that one should fly from the field of battle before the fight has properly begun! What a lot!

*10th June, 1932.*

The new Minister for Home Affairs, von Gayl,<sup>2</sup> spoke yesterday afternoon to the Reichsrat.<sup>3</sup> They say it was awful to listen to that weary, senile greybeard speaking about politics. I read his speech at breakfast this morning. Simply dreadful! If that's the best we can do there's no hope for us.

Phrases, nothing but phrases! He, Herr Gayl, is "by conviction" a Monarchist; "therefore" he is in duty bound, more than anybody else, to guard and defend the Republican constitution. Besides, he had sworn allegiance to the constitution, "to the President himself". I wonder how much else has been sworn under the same authority.

In general, the Minister proclaimed his confidence in the Civil Service. But what he includes under the concept of Civil Servant he did not divulge. I will

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hirtsiefer was Minister of Public Welfare in the Prussian Cabinet.

<sup>2</sup> Baron Wilhelm von Gayl, jurist and agricultural expert, member of the Herren Club and a strong and preferred Monarchist.

<sup>3</sup> The Reichsrat was a Council of the representatives of the States of the German Reich. It was intended by the Weimar Constitution as Federal Council to act, in some respects, as a Second Chamber. It was abolished by the Nazi régime.

recapitulate it for him : aristocrat by extraction, a couple of duelling scars on the face, and general stupidity. All this alleviated by "national" convictions. There are certainly glorious times in front of us !"

Evening at the Herren Club. Herr von Papen was present in person, and provided the comic relief necessary in these dismal days.

He was again toying with the favourite child of his imagination, his project for a German-French coalition against Russia. Accordingly, he had invited a whole crowd of Generals and a few prominent Commanders in the Navy.

Papen held that a complete agreement among all the States of West Europe "must" be possible under the banner of "Death to Bolshevism". He seems to know absolutely nothing of the international enmities within that same Western Europe, or of the more critical enmities within "national" Germany. But on the other hand he is, of course, Chancellor. And that this Papen army at the very best (in other words, if it ever came into being) would have millions and millions threatening it in the rear seems to disturb this dilettante not in the slightest. If the business were as simple as it seems to his rabbit-mind, the incomparably more gifted General Hoffmann,<sup>1</sup> with his incomparably more brilliant plan, would have been successful twelve years ago.

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<sup>1</sup> General Max von Hoffman was Chief of Staff to successive Commanders-in-Chief on the Eastern Front during the World War. He was largely responsible for drawing up the plans which resulted in the crushing defeat of the Russian armies at Tannenberg in 1914, and represented the High Command during the peace negotiations with the Bolsheviks at Brest-Litovsk in the winter of 1917-18. He died in 1927. He was probably the ablest General produced during the War in any army in the field.



But this Papen ? He simply doesn't count ! It was significant that Herr Goering, Herr Roehm,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Goebbels<sup>2</sup> and Count Helldorff<sup>3</sup> from the Nazis were also present, and tried to attract the general attention to themselves. But without any striking success ; the officers were visibly anxious to remain as distant as possible.

Papen must have been given the impression that we were not very sympathetic to his project. Consequently he tried at the end to ladle out the necessary syrup. The Army was burning to rescind the Versailles Treaty, but this goal was unattainable so long as Germany did not have the necessary heavy guns at her disposal. These—according to his theory—we could wangle for the proposed war against Russia ; that was the only cloak under which complete re-armament could be achieved. But once Germany was armed, then it was only a question of time until it turned its power against the West. The final decision (so Papen ended his brilliant speech) would take place before the gates of Paris.

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<sup>1</sup> Ernst Roehm, a former officer of the Regular Army, was implicated in various conspiracies against the Republic and eventually left the Reichswehr to act as instructor to the Bolivian Army. He returned to Germany and became an ardent member of the Nazi Party. He organized and later became Chief-of-Staff of the Storm Troops, and after the Nazi Revolution was appointed Under-Secretary of State to the Stadthalter of Bavaria. Later he was promoted to be a Cabinet Minister in the Cabinet of the Reich, and was placed in charge of all Storm Troop and Stahlhelm activities. He is the military organizing genius of the régime.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Joseph Goebbels, the "golden-tongued orator of Germany", is the organizer of victory of his party. He did not join the party until recent years, but when he did he brought to it a genius for propaganda. As editor of the *Angriff* and as a Nazi member of the Reichstag he proclaimed the doctrines of Hitler and fiercely attacked his opponents. In the Hitler Cabinet he is Minister of National Enlightenment and Propaganda.

<sup>3</sup> Count von Helldorff, son of the famous racehorse owner, was leader of the Berlin Storm Troops and, for a brief period, Police-President of Potsdam after the Nazi Revolution. He was later appointed Reichs Commissar of Horse-racing.

A pretty argument ! The only question is whether the world is likely to be taken in by such a swindle. As long as Herr Papen rules us it certainly will not be so perversely stupid. The matter will have to be approached in a different way.

I may add that Goering, Goebbels, and Roehm greeted Papen's idea with enthusiasm. Obviously they have no ideas of their own, and so they are thankful to have the opportunity of borrowing one from Papen.

Hopeless !

*11th June, 1932.*

To-day I had the questionable pleasure of seeing Papen in his warpaint : he spoke in the old Herrenhaus<sup>1</sup> to a full gathering of the Agricultural Council.<sup>2</sup>

From beginning to end, pure Papen ! Phrases, phrases, and more phrases. Full-blown dilettantism and wretched melodrama such as nobody dares to produce to-day on the remotest provincial theatres.

Actually he said nothing. He merely "documented" the "radically new direction of State policy". And all, it went without saying, "within the framework of the constitution". Responsible for the economic crisis (in spite of the fact that it is international !) was the "criminal" fact that private industries had to a great extent become "socialized". This "socialization" had escaped my attention. But

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<sup>1</sup> The Herrenhaus, the former Imperial House of Lords, was abolished by the Weimar Constitution.

<sup>2</sup> The Agricultural Council is a legal and consultative body representing the interests of German farmers.

Herr Papen must know ; after all he is Chancellor by the grace of Neudeck.

The landed proprietors cheered him to the echo. Well, he had a right to expect that after such condescension on his part.

In the evening I met Hitler (and at the house of a Bank and Stock Exchange king of Jewish extraction too ! ) The impression Hitler makes upon me is, and remains, devastating. This curious prophet is quite incapable of listening ; he goes on speaking all the time as if he were addressing a public meeting, and to every interruption he reacts immediately with a new harangue, which, of course, is always irrelevant to the point at issue. Hitler's volubility is surpassed only by his poverty of thought.

He sounded me on Goering's plan for detailing Storm Troop officers to attend the Army manœuvres. He did all he could to convince me that war against France and Poland might "break out any day", and that Germany was lost if it had not at its disposal a sufficient number of well-trained officers. As to that I am of his opinion ; but I have little inclination to throw the Army open to a gang of fellows like Captain Roehm. Naturally, I did not tell him that, but wriggled away with arguments on the Peace Treaty ; he was tactful enough to dismiss my words with a pitying smile.

General Rundstedt<sup>1</sup> relieved me from my disagreeable embarrassment. Rundstedt's opinion of the "Leader" is exactly the same as my own. The

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<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant-General Gerd von Runstedt, Commander of the Mark of Brandenburg, the Third Military District.

two of them don't seem to be exactly the best of friends !

*12th June, 1932.*

The importunity of the Nazis knows no bounds. To-day appeared General "Y" (at one time a hopeful officer, but for years now sunk in the Brown bog) and laid before me a detailed plan of operations against Belgium and France, an "improved" Schlieffen Plan, as "Y", with characteristic modesty, sought to emphasize. He begged us to take this plan into consideration in view of "the certainty, inevitable in the long run, of an offensive against France".

The plan is as follows : Between Belgium and Germany lies the Dutch province of South Limburg, the coal district of Holland, with a length of roughly forty miles and an average breadth of some twelve miles. The advance in August 1914, said "Y", was checked by this strip of land ; "the battle of Paris was lost in South Limburg".

So it was important not to repeat this old error in a new war merely for the sake of assuring the neutrality of Holland. "If we fight France again, then the Dutch question will have to be tackled too."

He, General "Y", recommended, therefore, that we should face the possibility of a march through South Limburg. His colleagues were ready to pledge themselves to prepare public opinion in South Limburg accordingly, so that surprise attacks from the populace, such as had been experienced in Belgium, could be

ruled out. For the purpose of this propaganda campaign he would require a yearly subsidy of round about 6,000,000 marks. Would we, as the matter concerned was a purely military one, make this sum available ?

I did not conceal my horror at this grotesque demand. I told him that we were ready to hand over the "improved" Schlieffen Plan to the competent department, but we had no money at our disposal for such a purpose. "Y" refused to give in. He had talked over the plan with men who were among the highest in the land ; they had been enthusiastically in its favour, and considered it the only solution. And the Ministry of War could hardly be inconvenienced by such a "trifling sum" !

I referred him to Thyssen<sup>1</sup> who, after all, must have the greatest interest in the "eventual" acquisition of the Limburg coal-mines. "Y" replied in a resigned voice that Thyssen knew of the project, but refused to adopt such a long-term policy.

We parted with no very great cordiality. General "Y" seems extraordinarily naïve to me : we'll take care not to make ourselves dependent on the Nazis by any such scheme as he suggests. I don't relish the prospect of having to give in to every threat of black-mail from the Brown camp later on. I have told Schleicher. He entirely shares my apprehensions.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Fritz Thyssen, a great industrialist with wide interests in the coal and iron areas of the Ruhr and elsewhere. He was one of the chief financial backers of the Nazi Party, and as early as January 1931 introduced Hitler to the Industrialists' Club of Düsseldorf as the "Saviour of Germany".

As far as we are concerned, the unsavoury business is done with.

13th June, 1932.

According to Schleicher, yesterday's conference between Hindenburg and Papen and the Prime Ministers of the South German States did not pass off so harmlessly as the official *communiqué* tried to make out. Held<sup>1</sup> (Bavaria) in particular spoke very frankly against the Papen system and talked of the "almost unendurable burdens imposed by German unity".

Papen himself was naïve enough to represent the whole question, and the profound oppositions that actually exist within Germany, as mere trivialities. He tried to brush all dissension aside with empty phrases, and, of course, only succeeded in making the conflict of opinion still more intense. We are in a fair way to see Germany destroyed by Prussia. If in the war in 1870 the French had won instead of us, many things would be different now, and, I truly believe, better ! For Germany too !

Schleicher is furious at the "clown" (that is his latest term for the Chancellor, "his" Chancellor). I'm convinced that he will soon curse the day he "made" Papen.

The South German States closed their ranks against the proposed repeal of the ban on the Storm Troops and the wearing of uniform ; in fact, they

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Held, Minister-President of Bavaria, evicted from office by a Nazi *coup d'état* in March 1933.

threatened, without mincing their words, to take measures of their own against Hitlerism if Papen should surrender to the menaces of the Brown Shirts. The Chancellor thereupon asked whether they would do so even if it was against the wish of the Government of the Reich. Held replied : "Even then, since the safety of the State demands it !"

Herr Hindenburg was indignant with the South Germans. He completely approved of Papen's policy, of course ; if a man is Prussian in the worst sense of the word, that is apparently enough for him.

And Schleicher ? He sees Papen heading for catastrophe and yet dares do nothing. For "Papen has Hindenburg's friendship". A fine argument !

Another thing that was symptomatic : Held abruptly brought up the question whether it was true that the Government of the Reich intended to withdraw control of the police from the various States and vest it in itself. Papen replied (untruthfully) with a plain negative. The value of this answer, however, he immediately lessened by declaring, with a bow in Held's direction : "If we should do so, however, we shall see to it that no National Socialist Minister will be given control of the police."

And Hindenburg underlined this richly fatuous phrase with the remark that he would take pretty good care to prevent the "Braunauers" (that is his term for the Hitler movement) from gaining control over the police troops.

In his own words : "So long as I am in office these bandits won't get their hands on the police force."

Held stuck to his guns. He asked, what about National Socialist Brunswick and Thuringia? Papen replied meaningly: "The last word has not been said there, either." I fear that Herr Papen will not be the one to say that last word.

In plain terms: Papen is preparing an attack on the constitution and on the German States. To the greater glory of Prussia! He is allowing himself to be driven on by Hitler's ambitions, and Schleicher's laboriously knotted reins are beginning slowly but surely to slip from his hands.

To-day, Papen has spoken out. He received Hitler in Schleicher's presence. The party pontiff of the Nazis was highly displeased and behaved with great insolence. He seemed to feel he was top-dog, and categorically demanded the immediate repeal of the ban on the Storm Troops and the wearing of uniform. "Otherwise he could not guarantee that his men would maintain discipline"!

After Hitler had been tactless enough to remind the Chancellor of the agreement they had come to, Papen consented; it had been his intention, in any case, to repeal both laws within the next few days.

For the rest, Hitler was just as devastating as he has always been. Machine-guns, I fancy, are the only language he could really manage to understand. To speak that language, it is true, good nerves are required, and above all, the courage to co-operate with the working-classes.

And nobody in high position has that nerve and that courage. The tragedy of it!



*14th June, 1932.*

The prohibition against the Storm Troops and wearing of uniform was lifted to-day.<sup>1</sup> I don't envy Hindenburg his courage in coming to this decision, to which he had the added pleasure of putting his signature. Two months ago he declared the Nazis a danger to the State, and to-day, after the Hitlerites, with the benevolent collaboration of their leader, have murdered dozens of people, they have suddenly become "recruits for the work of reconstruction". Has the old man lost the capacity to see how he is prostituting himself before the eyes of the whole world by this see-saw policy? Soon one will have to feel ashamed of being a German!

Long interview with Schleicher. Papen is seriously planning a coup against Prussia. By the artificial manufacture of financial difficulties, the Chancellor means to drive the Prussian Government to desperation and make it ripe for capitulation. Schleicher, who desires the same end, is not in agreement with Papen's methods; but Hindenburg supports the Chancellor's plans. And Schleicher cannot afford to risk his post!

We are ruled by intrigue. Everybody is trying to unseat his neighbour. The time when a man's word

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<sup>1</sup> By Presidential Decree dated April 13, 1932, the Storm Troops had been forbidden to wear their brown uniforms, to parade or demonstrate, or to drill. General Groener, at the request of Herr Severing, the Prussian Minister of Interior, had urged this step on Chancellor Brüning and the President. This event brought about Groener's resignation of the Reichs Ministry of Interior a month later, and materially contributed to the fall of Brüning at the end of May.

could be taken in Germany is long past. Will it ever come back? Certainly not so long as this clique remains in power!

15th June, 1932.

To-day I received the following "strictly private" round-robin from the Herren Club, which, apart from me, is being sent to all "politically and socially influential associations in Germany :

"A fact to be noted is that in the new Cabinet the Chancellor himself is a member of the Committee of the Herren Club, and that Herr von Braun<sup>1</sup> and Herr von Gayl are likewise members of the club. Herr von Schleicher, the Minister for War, belongs to a club which exchanges hospitality with ours, and the new Minister of Finance<sup>2</sup> is also one of our frequent visitors.

"Our general opinion of the Papen Cabinet may be gathered from our articles in the *Ring*. But perhaps you will also be interested in the broadcast speech which Herr von Gleichen<sup>3</sup> made on the evening after the formation of the Cabinet. I also enclose a copy of a letter in which Herr von Gleichen has communicated his view of the situation to a well-known publicist at present residing abroad.

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<sup>1</sup> Baron von Braun, Minister of Agriculture and Food in the Papen and Schleicher Cabinets.

<sup>2</sup> Count Schwerin von Krosigk, a former Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, and, until May 1933, Director of the Budget Department of the Ministry of Finance.

<sup>3</sup> Baron von Gleichen, Secretary and member of the Political Committee of the Berlin Herren Club, one of the principal figures in the conspiracy of the Club against Dr. Brüning.

"At the approaching election it will be particularly difficult for the people most closely connected with our circle to vote for any of the existing parliamentary parties. All the more urgent is the duty of our class to awaken the country to the necessity and the autonomous rights of the Presidential Cabinet<sup>1</sup> as at present constituted. Such general approval neither excludes criticism of separate members of the Cabinet, nor can jeopardize our continued intellectual collaboration in the practical problems which are presented to the Government for solution.

"In face of the probability that the Papen-Schleicher Cabinet will not come out of the July elections with a working majority, the active collaboration of politically and socially influential circles such as are represented by the gentlemen's associations in the country will be peculiarly necessary for the Government."

In the enclosed letter by Herr von Gleichen, the following appeared among other things :

"Chancellor von Papen is the ostensible head of the Cabinet. But the real leader is the Minister for War, von Schleicher. The new Cabinet is not only tolerated by the National Socialists, but has the explicit approval of their leader. Nor is the new Cabinet a merely emergency Cabinet, as the Press falsely reports, but will certainly be confirmed in

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<sup>1</sup> A Presidential Cabinet, such as those of Papen and Schleicher, is one independent of any political party and not responsible to the Reichstag, but enjoying the confidence of the President.



KURT VON SCHLEICHER  
Formerly Reichs-Chancellor and Minister of Defence.



power by the new Reichstag, or at least by the party which, according to all indications, will be the strongest. In return, the National Socialists will be allowed free play in the various States, and certain intentions also exist concerning Prussia, that is, for the appointment of an approved man as Premier or Reichs Commissioner, and the reorganization of its internal administration with the powerful collaboration of the National Socialist forces."

How anyone can concoct and send out such stuff, even after thinking of it, is a puzzle to me. Either these gentlemen are abysmally stupid, or else they are resolved to make a bid for supreme power.

Hammerstein tells me that yesterday the "German Association" made yet once more an attempt to found a new Centre Party. The stage managers were Dr. Eckener,<sup>1</sup> Solf the Ambassador,<sup>2</sup> and (behind the scenes, naturally!) Major-General von Seeckt<sup>3</sup> and Burgomaster Jarres.<sup>4</sup> The experiment has miscarried. There seems to be no desire any longer to conserve the rotten and decaying tatters of the political game.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hugo Eckener, Director of the Zeppelin Works and Commander of the Zeppelin airship.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Solf, Imperial Secretary of State for the Colonies and later for Internal Affairs, Ambassador to Japan under the Republic.

<sup>3</sup> General Oberst Hans von Seeckt had a distinguished war record, in the course of which he served as Chief-of-Staff to Marshal von Mackensen on the Balkan front. After the Armistice he was appointed Chief-of-Staff of the Reichswehr, which owes to him, in very great measure, its present high standard of efficiency. He was removed from this post in 1926 for allowing the son of the Crown Prince of Germany to take part in military manoeuvres. Since the Nazi Revolution General von Seeckt has paid two visits to China as adviser to the armies of the Nanking Government.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Jarres, Burgomaster of Duisberg, was Nationalist candidate in the first Presidential electoral ballot of 1925. In the second ballot he gave way to Marshal von Hindenburg, who was elected.

*16th June, 1932.*

A reasonable human being for once. I had a Socialist writer with me to-day, formerly an officer, the man who wrote the appeal to the army that I have already mentioned. We talked for hours about political and military matters. I've seldom listened to such clear and bold opinions, and I frankly admit that I've learned a great deal in my old age.

If his views could be impressed upon the Labour movement we would be a great deal further forward. But I fear that the Socialists will not lose much time in cold-shouldering such an independent spirit. These dwarfs of to-day, who have the cheek to call themselves Bebel's successors, cannot digest men of his character.

"Inner harmony between the people and the army" is his watchword. I asked him whether the Social Democratic Party were prepared to put this idea into operation, and declared categorically that I and many of the higher officers were ready to collaborate enthusiastically and without reservation. But he only shrugged his shoulders; he knows how fossilized and corrupt the organization is. He intends to make the attempt by way of the "Reichs Banner"<sup>1</sup> adherents.

The attempt must be made. But neither of us is convinced that it will be successful. Herr Höltermann himself is more or less like the pontiffs

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<sup>1</sup> The Social Democratic organization of ex-Service men sworn to support and defend the Weimar Constitution. Suppressed after the Nazi Revolution of 1933.

in Lindenstrasse; besides, intellectually and materially, he depends on Klüngel.<sup>1</sup> Schleicher, who has had occasion to talk to him several times, has no opinion of him. Though Höltermann is only about forty yet, he is nothing better than an old woman. Schleicher says: "He should have been a parson."

We mutually agreed to keep in touch and work for the same end, even if we have to do so at first in different spheres.

*17th June, 1932.*

A very different experience from yesterday's. A talk with Hitler. If this man ever attains power, then it will be a sign that we've gone off our heads. And yet this prophet makes an uncertain, almost timid impression; I can't imagine him ever making a fight for the supreme power.

I led the conversation to his relations with Papen. Hitler admitted that he had pledged himself to Papen. Would his supporters follow him in this policy? I asked. And he replied: "My supporters will have to obey me. I have trained them for that purpose." And that was that!

He tentatively sounded me again about Goering's pet scheme (to give Storm Troop officers a look-in during the Army manœuvres). I pretended to be hard of hearing. About "Y's" plan he said not a single word, which I can understand very well.

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<sup>1</sup> Social Democratic Deputies in the Reichstag; leaders and organizers of the Reichs Banner.



*20th June, 1932.*

Have been absent on service in Breslau for two days. Nothing of importance.

To-day (I had just got back) came a high official from the Foreign Ministry, who brought me a secret communication with the request that I should "treat it in confidence, and return it at my convenience". I was also to "lay it before" Generals von Schleicher and von Hammerstein.

A fat dossier, without any signature. The envelope stamped with the seal of the Foreign Office. It concerned a certain former military attaché in Washington, Herr Franz von Papen. The same whom the wrath of God and the whim of the old boy have now made Chancellor of the Reich.

Well, here goes : Herr von Papen, at the beginning of the World War, stood at the head of the espionage service of the Central European Powers in Washington. It did not take him long to extend his activities beyond mere espionage, and to try his luck in the sphere of sabotage as well. He took (naturally in the most ostentatious fashion possible, as was fitting in a true aristocrat) a crowd of venal Indians and Irishmen into his service, and amused himself by organizing the destruction of the railway connections and the bridges between the States and Canada, so as to hinder America's transport of arms and munitions to England and France (these transports generally took that route). Besides this, he made experiments with bombs and other explosives in American cargo ships, had the fodder for English horses poisoned, etc.

So as to be able to carry on this business with more *éclat*, the ingenious Franz founded, with the help of a few dummy directors, a thoroughgoing business firm, "The American Import and Export Company", and appointed the German Finance Attaché, Dr. Albert, as manager of the concern.

The English Secret Service naturally soon saw through the dodge. They succeeded in smuggling one of their agents, a lady, into Papen's firm as a private secretary. This lady was brilliant at her job of finding out all there was to be known about the "firm"; no letter left the place without her having copied it out or photographed it. The agent learned everything that the English Secret Service regarded as desirable, and when the official documents were inadequate, Herr von Papen was extremely obliging. Suddenly all attempts at sabotage began to be foiled in advance; Papen's agents vanished by dozens into gaol. All the world laughed; only he noticed nothing.

The English and American authorities watched these goings-on for quite a long time. Finally they prepared for more serious action.

Through the lady some obsolete plans of the American coast fortresses were dangled before Herr Papen; he paid an incredibly high sum of money for them, and sent the documents (quite worthless for the conduct of the war in Europe) by special courier to Germany as a fitting reminder of his superlative diplomatic abilities. His own vanity became the snare in which he was caught.

The lady, all-knowing, learned from him all the particulars of his project. He divulged to her that

an American journalist called Archibald was to convey the plans across in a hollow walking-stick. He even gave the name of the ship, the route, the exact time of departure. And when the little ship sailed into the nearest port of call (it was in England), the journalist, very much to Papen's surprise, was arrested, and the plans in his mysterious walking-stick confiscated.

Next day the Press published the whole story. Papen's reputation was ruined once and for all, and shortly afterwards he and his confederate, Boy Ed, the German Naval Attaché, were expelled from the United States. But, for Germany, the diplomatic game in Washington was finally lost ; shortly after that the American Government seized the excuse of the sinking of the *Lusitania* to declare war.

Thus the secret report of the Foreign Office. A short note is appended to it ; it seems important enough to me to be preserved in my diary. It runs : "According to the unanimous reports of circles in America friendly to Germany, and in the opinion of the Foreign Office itself, the activities of Military Attaché von Papen must be considered to have been one of the chief factors in provoking the United States to declare war on Germany."

So that is what they think in the Wilhelmstrasse about the abilities of Papen, "our" Chancellor—a fine specimen, God knows !

Schleicher grinned when I laid the report before him. Copies should be sent to every German military attaché, he commanded. It shall be done with

pleasure ! In any case, documents of that kind will be safer abroad than in our fine Germany.

And it will be a good lesson to our military attachés how not to act. Or an "official" hint that one can become Reichs Chancellor though one is a wooden-headed fool !

*21st June, 1932.*

Schleicher has handed over to me his correspondence with the deputy Erkelenz.<sup>1</sup> That Schleicher should defend the Reichs President against the reproach of using politics for his own ends, is to his honour, but is not in accordance with historical truth. And does not exactly advance the course of things as I envisage it and as it should be if we were honest.

The second question is whether the Reichswehr is committed to any political party. Erkelenz says yes, Schleicher says no. Neither is right. Schleicher sticks to his point because he has to on account of his position. And Erkelenz ? If he knew how much our "bayonets" had to do with making the Papen Cabinet he would not let himself in for any further discussion !

But Erkelenz has no cause, and is not competent to reproach Schleicher on that account. It is true, we did play our part. But we acted because the others, and above all Herr Erkelenz's two parties (he's a Socialist at present, and was a Democrat

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<sup>1</sup> Anton Erkelenz, a former member of the Democratic Party. He joined the Social Democrats and became a Deputy in 1930.

before that ; to-day he's a party friend of the ex-War Minister Noske,<sup>1</sup> and not so long ago was the party friend of the other ex-War Minister Gessler !<sup>2</sup>) refused to act as they should have done.

We did so, God knows, not for pleasure, but out of sheer necessity. Our friends, the Social Democrats, have no right to complain about that. They are always talking of the power they intend to win in the present-day state. Good. But if one wants power, then one must want supreme power. All the rest is talk. And military power is, after all, essential for supreme power. But the Army won't let itself be flattered with soft words now, after having had mud flung at it for fourteen years, and being chivvied by creatures like Schöppflin and Künstler !<sup>3</sup>

An evening on neutral ground with a few gentlemen from the Prussian ministries. Interesting men among them, but also a number of painful cases. Among the latter are those who cry up the "new policy" the loudest—when their chiefs are out of hearing. Since I am on the subject, Ministerial Councillor Schönnher,<sup>4</sup> for instance, Severing's<sup>5</sup> right-hand man, honoured me with the most obsequious flattery.

<sup>1</sup> Gustav Noske was the first Minister of Defence under the Republic. He crushed the Spartacist (Communist) Revolution of December 1918.

<sup>2</sup> Otto Gessler succeeded Noske as Minister of Defence in 1920 and held office for ten years until succeeded by General Groener. Together with General von Seeckt, he built up the present Reichswehr, sparing no effort to secure for it the highest possible standard of efficiency.

<sup>3</sup> Social Democratic Deputies in the Reichstag.

<sup>4</sup> Administrative head of the Prussian Ministry of Interior under the Socialist régime. State-President of Frankfurt-on-the-Oder under the Nazi régime.

<sup>5</sup> Karl Severing, Social Democratic Deputy in the Reichstag, formerly Reichs Minister of Interior. Prussian Minister of Interior in the last Braun administration, bitter opponent of the Nazis, expelled from office by Von Papen on July 20, 1932.

I was very much taken by Heimannsberg,<sup>1</sup> the Police Commander. An honest man, who knows what he wants. Abegg,<sup>2</sup> the Prussian Secretary, is a decent man too, except that he is far too irresolute and unsure of himself. He suffers from an unrequited love for politics—a love, I fear, that will never find any return in this life.

Herr Klausener,<sup>3</sup> the head of the police department, is an impossible and curiously unsympathetic figure. He “believes” out of expediency ; that is my firm impression. The *Actio Catholica* has been entrusted to this man in Berlin (I believe, indeed, in all Prussia). Finally : Brecht,<sup>4</sup> a member of the Cabinet. The star turn of Prussia. Both clever and pleasant. If he were only Prime Minister of Prussia something might be done.

22nd June, 1932.

The Social Democratic Trades Union League have declined the Communists’ offer to form a united front. Good. When anyone wants to commit suicide, one shouldn’t hinder him. The Social Democratic Press is jubilant, naturally, over this “heroic” decision. Long live the party !

But the Red trade unions themselves ! Splendid

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<sup>1</sup> Major Magnus Heimannsberg, Commander of the Prussian Police under the Socialist régime. Dismissed by Von Papen.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Wilhelm Abegg, Prussian Secretary of State, dismissed July 20, 1932.

<sup>3</sup> Head of the Police Department of the Prussian Ministry of Interior ; dismissed July 1932.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Arnold Brecht, head of a Department in the Prussian Treasury. Prussian Plenipotentiary in the Reichs Federal Council.

fellows, and a splendid idea. If it weren't for their fatuous and cowardly "leaders" who don't even carry out the rules of the unions!

To-day there is a conference of the German States at Gayl's. I am eager to know the outcome.

*23rd June, 1932.*

A sensation at Lausanne yesterday. Disarmament move by Hoover, the American President. He wants to have all armaments reduced by, roughly, a third.

If the whole business weren't an election dodge on a grand scale, and if Mr. Hoover's secondary intention weren't to drive a wedge through the united European front on the question of the war debts to America, one might really fall into the stupid mistake of taking the American proposal seriously.

Hoover's proposal touches us only indirectly. But it gives us, of course, an excellent opportunity to advocate equality of armament for Germany from a new platform, with greater force and stronger authority than has been possible hitherto. Military equality that would mean in practice, of course, since our "legally" forbidden arms would have to be counted in too, the military superiority of the Royal Prussian Republic of Germany.

The commander of the Reichswehr in Stuttgart has sent in a hair-raising report regarding the scandalous agitation carried on by the Nazis in his division. These fellows are already behaving as if the Reichswehr were their private monopoly! But one thing is still more incredible. In two particularly

glaring cases (the men were actually incited to disobey their commanding officer and pledge their obedience to Hitler!) the command has initiated proceedings, in the last three or four months, against the leading Nazis. But in both cases the Public Prosecutor declined to take action, because there were not "sufficient grounds of suspicion" to go on. If it had been Communists, then, from what I know of public prosecutors, the hundredth part of the evidence would have been quite "sufficient" to set a State action going. This is what is called in the beautiful and striking phrase of the constitution, "Equal rights for all".

And as for German justice! A corrupt chapter in our annals, which for a long time has had nothing in common with "rights". And yet we have republican rulers, even in Stuttgart. But the ministers are "tolerant", true-blue democrats and suicidal fools. And they shut their eyes. Disgusting!

*24th June, 1932.*

Hitler, who has never seen his equal in brazenness, is becoming impudent! After having unleashed the most savage persecution, after his people's having chalked up hundreds of murders to their credit in a few weeks, he yesterday handed a formal ultimatum to Gayl, the Minister for Home Affairs. And through Herr Goering too.

He demands proclamation of martial law (against the Brown murderers?); suppression of the Com-



munist Party (a paper demand! The Communist Party won't let themselves be suppressed! Besides, the "crime" of the Communist Party consists only in refusing to let their people be murdered by the Nazis); and control of the Prussian police throughout the Reich. Otherwise "events will have to take their course", so Herr Goering declares.

Gayl is terrified. He would love to give in. Schleicher refuses. He said that really the only reply was to arrest Goering and Hitler and set them up against a wall. "Really!" Why only "really"? No one has the courage to do anything decisive. I would like to be in power for twenty-four hours; there wouldn't be a single Nazi left in the whole country!

But as things are? Hopeless!

*25th June, 1932.*

Full Cabinet session. I was invited.

Papen made his report on Lausanne, and his failure. (Of course he is convinced that he was a brilliant success.) He joined in the disarmament swindle along with the others; the Hoover plan, he said, was the "magic cap of invisibility, under cover of which it would be an easy matter to make Germany superior in arms over France." But I fear that the French are not so stupid as Papen appears to be.

Papen is in a fearful rage over the Nazi ultimatum. He drivelled about "ingratitude", as if one can carry on politics in a grateful spirit, particularly if

one happens to be a Papen! Of course, he didn't dare to suggest any definite step against Hitler. Schleicher's proposals, which were brought forward with the utmost seriousness, he declined with raised hands (Bethmann-Hollweg<sup>1</sup> must have looked at the world with somewhat the same eyes on the 1st of August, 1914). He proposes, first of all, to interview Hitler, and flatters himself that he'll be able to change that megalomaniac's mind. Schleicher threatened to resign from the Government if martial law were declared and the Reichswehr dragged into the political conflict.

*30th June, 1932.*

Four days in Stuttgart, Munich and Nuremberg. The troops are in splendid condition. Among the subalterns, especially when drunk, there exists much sympathy for Hitler.

Afternoon in consultation with Schleicher. All the commands have been admonished to keep a vigilant eye open for Nazi agitation and to mount strict guard over the arsenals and munition depots. In certain districts the outlook is very dark, and the rumours that the Nazis intend to let fly begin to take serious shape. In any case, orders have been given ruthlessly to employ all available arms at the slightest attack by the Brown Shirts, and crush them thoroughly.

The day before yesterday Schleicher was with

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<sup>1</sup> Bethmann-Hollweg, Imperial German Chancellor at the outbreak of the World War.

Gregor Strasser.<sup>1</sup> The latter is perfectly reasonable, and quite prepared to support the Papen Government and even to collaborate actively with it at a later stage. Strasser believes that he could win the half at least of the Nazis in the Reichstag for this policy; but first the Prussian question must be solved.

*1st July, 1932.*

Schleicher told me to-day that, after the disheartening experiences of the last few months, he had resolved to let things take their course. Nothing could be done with Papen. He, Schleicher, intended from now on simply to see that no superlative folly was committed and that all our boats were not burned. For the rest, he is going to wait until his time comes.

I led the conversation round to the state of Prussia, which is becoming more and more difficult. Schleicher admitted that sooner or later something would have to be done to clear matters up, above all, to put an end to the danger of having the Reich and Prussia under two mutually hostile governments. The Cabinet had come to no decision yet, but it was

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<sup>1</sup> Gregor Strasser and his brother Otto were at one time enthusiastic supporters of the Nazi Party and both rose to prominence in its councils. Otto left the party in 1931 and became one of its bitterest critics. Gregor continued a member and conducted negotiations with Dr. Brüning for an alliance between the Centre and Nazi Parties. These proved vain. In December 1932, Gregor Strasser negotiated with General von Schleicher independently from Hitler, who was at that time haggling with von Papen. Strasser was dismissed by the party together with those Nazis who had followed his leadership. Later, after the Nazi Revolution, he was received back and given a small appointment in the provinces.

certain that Gayl's amendment to the constitution would be rejected, and had not the slightest prospect of becoming law.

The Communist counter-movement against the Papen policy is splendid. If only the Social Democrats, who are terrified to death of a united Red front, in case it should prejudice their party, wouldn't keep on putting obstacles in the way! Much might be effected, but for that. But as things are!

Admiral Raeder<sup>1</sup> was with Schleicher to-day, and told us the results of the Navy's new training for reserve officers, which has made a beginning with 135 former naval officers. He's very pleased. If only this kind of training weren't so cursedly expensive! And the criticisms in the Reichstag on top of that! That alone is sufficient reason to abolish all this parliamentarism.

*2nd July, 1932.*

Oskar Hindenburg wants a detailed report of the effective strength and equipment of the Reichswehr, for "papa". In addition, we are to produce suggestions for training courses for the "Steel Helmets". The number aimed at provisionally, said Oskar, was round about 60,000 men, with the necessary officers. Could we find accommodation for these troops, and in which garrisons? And how many of them could we equip at a moment's notice in case of anything happening?

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<sup>1</sup> Director of Naval Operations of the Ministry of Defence.

The latter could be done without the slightest difficulty ; we could even provide for a few more Steel Helmets.<sup>1</sup> But the accommodation and the training isn't so easy as in the Navy. I don't know yet how we're to do that without exciting attention. But it will be done if they put the necessary funds at our disposal. Something can be done with the Steel Helmet crowd.

*3rd July, 1932.*

Rumours are flying that Papen is going to take official action against Prussia at Hitler's dictation. The only people who seem never to have heard of it are the members of the Prussian Government—the most interested parties. Or else they are wilfully blind : an ostrich-policy has always been favoured by them.

If Herr Braun had only a notion of how precarious our strength is, and how little risk we can afford to take at this moment, just when the main harvest is beginning ! But "they" can never see anything, except in parliamentary terms. Even a small infusion of fighting blood would do them all the good in the world.

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<sup>1</sup>The Steel Helmets (Stahlhelm) was formed as an organization of ex-Service men and their sons. It was definitely nationalist, monarchist and reactionary in its political views, and was adopted as the "private army" of the Papen Government. Its leader, Herr Seldte, became Minister of Labour in the Hitler Cabinet, and the organization was absorbed into the Storm Troops and placed under the orders of Major Roehm in 1934. The second leader, Colonel von Duisterberg, Nationalist, a Presidential candidate in the first Presidential electoral ballot of 1932, was expelled after the Nazi Revolution, as being a Jew.



HERMANN GOERING  
Prime Minister of Prussia. Minister in Hitler's Cabinet.



4th July, 1932.

Stolzenberg,<sup>1</sup> the manufacturer, has brought us the latest reports on his newest gas, the "Red Cross". Really, a wonderful achievement. It can be produced in any quantity required without the slightest difficulty—we can get all the raw material at home. Moreover, it is much cheaper than any other yet discovered. And incomparably more effective! A capacity of, roughly, forty times the capacity of the same weight of "Yellow Cross", which, God knows, was powerful enough.

That means that, without further trouble, our normal civil fleet of aeroplanes (which are excellently suited for night flying) could be put into operation. According to Stolzenberg's reports, no other State has an even comparable weapon. Reckoned in degrees of intensity, we possess a gas

Seventeen times as effective as Russia's,

Twenty-six times as effective as France's,

Twenty-nine times as effective as England's,

Thirty-four times as effective as Italy's,

not to speak of the other countries at all!

With an expenditure of, roughly, four to five million marks, Stolzenberg can enlarge his factories near Hamburg and put them in a state to produce the required quantities at any time. Once the factories are in existence, within fifty hours (reckoning, that is, from the suspension of ordinary production), the first

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<sup>1</sup> Proprietor and managing director of large chemical factories in Hamburg.



supply of gas can be delivered. So no enormous gas depot is required at all.

The gist of Stolzenberg's report is completely in line with our own tests. Schleicher and Hammerstein have decided to put the affair through. After all, they could do nothing else.

Stolzenberg assures us that the factories will be ready for action by the end of November this year. He intends to take on only carefully selected Steel Helmet men as workers.

*5th July, 1932.*

To-day the Left-wing Press, which seems to have the most reliable sources of information in the Brown House,<sup>1</sup> has published in large type :

“At the recent conference of the district leaders of the Hitlerite Party in Munich, it was confidentially divulged, among other things, that ever since the accession of the Papen Government the party has had an explicit promise that, by the day of the Reichstag elections at latest, a Reichs Commissioner in complete sympathy with the National Socialist Party will have taken over the government of Prussia. But should this plan be impossible (or not yet possible) of realization, on technical constitutional grounds, or because of the feeling in the South German States, Chancellor von Papen is resolved, and has pledged himself to Hitler to that effect, at least to transfer the Prussian Police Force from its present control to

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<sup>1</sup> National Headquarters of the Nazi Party at Munich.

that of the Minister for Home Affairs, according to Article 48, clause 2, of the constitution.<sup>1</sup> Thus the leaders of the Hitlerite Party can reckon with absolute safety that the Prussian Police, by the 31st July at the latest, will no longer be in the hands of the Braun-Severing Government, but under the command of someone sympathetic to the Hitlerite Party, if not, indeed, a member of it."

As soon as I reached my office I went straight to Schleicher, whom I found raging over the same newspaper report. That "clown" was the mildest term of endearment he had for his friend Papen.

He had not the slightest doubt that Papen had actually made this agreement with Herr Hitler; he had already received the same report a few days previously from a confidential agent in the Brown House. He had believed that it was only a piece of swaggering bravado, but now that illusion was pricked.

Schleicher was honestly indignant. The only justification for the whole business was that one day, shortly after the end of May, Herr von Papen let fall something over his coffee and cigar in the Herren Club about such a theoretical possibility; one would have, "if it came to the point", to offer the Nazis the ostensible sacrifice of the Prussian ministers, Braun and Severing, but only so that he himself might get Prussia the more safely into his hands and secure it finally against Hitler. He, Schleicher, had

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<sup>1</sup> Article 48 provides for government by Presidential Decree in the event of national emergency.

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turned this down decisively at the time ; he had been convinced from the very beginning that we would be simply overrun by the Nazis if we ever deserted the basis of constitutional right. Papen had seen the force of these objections and had never reopened the absurd project.

Schleicher thinks that Papen must be drunk with his own importance if he thinks he can concoct political schemes on his own. After all, he, Schleicher, is a member of the Cabinet too, and will refuse to be confronted with accomplished facts. He has already rung up Planck,<sup>1</sup> the Secretary of State, and demanded the immediate summoning of the Cabinet. It will take place to-morrow ; Papen is off on his travels to-day again.

Besides, he will write to the Old Gentleman about it.

I feel somewhat anxious. Papen is capable of making powerless eunuchs of us all and himself as well. That can't do him much harm, but as for us !

*6th July, 1932.*

Schleicher returned from the Cabinet sitting in a boiling rage. Smiling and cool, Papen admitted that he had made an arrangement with Hitler exactly as published in the Press. But since Hitler had not kept to his promise to put no difficulties in the way of the Government, he, Papen, was no longer committed

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<sup>1</sup> Captain Erwin von Planck, son of Max Planck, the great physicist, formerly an officer of the Reichswehr and an aide-de-camp of Schleicher, became private secretary to Dr. Brüning when he was Chancellor. He was promoted to Secretary of State to the Reichs Chancellor by von Papen and retained by Schleicher. Dismissed by Hitler.

to anything either. And that was really all there was to it !

Schleicher fears that the publication of this unsavoury business will create great difficulties for the Cabinet, and even force it into an impossible dilemma. For now Hitler will naturally follow up his advantage.

And this is the New German statesmanship ! If Braun and Severing were worth their salt they'd have Papen and Hitler arrested for high treason this very day. But the craven fear of that crowd is unfortunately still greater than Papen's fatuity.

*7th July, 1932.*

An interesting report from our military expert in Moscow. The condition of the Russian Army must be excellent ! Splendid human material, clever and (what with us is unfortunately still a sore point) incorruptible officers, clear-cut organization and, above all, an almost incredible technical perfection.

There are really only four nations in the world whose men are capable of being turned into soldiers : Germany, France, Russia, and Japan. Hitherto, certainly, the French soldier and the French military machine have been the best ; but now France must yield precedence to Russia. We have all underestimated the importance, the military importance of the political and politicized soldier, and we have often turned up our noses at the Russkys. But to-day ? I would advise nobody to meddle with them. The time for a war of intervention, once so

enthusiastically canvassed, is past—which, of course, will not prevent Herr Papen from continuing to dream about it. But if our politics should ever manage to come to terms with Russia, then good-bye to Western Europe !

To-morrow I'm going to Cologne and Mainz for a couple of days. Frontier questions.

*10th July, 1932.*

I seized the opportunity to make a short excursion to South Limburg. General Y is right ; a better place for launching a strategical advance than this strip of land there can scarcely be in the whole world. But how could one excuse it diplomatically afterwards ? We can't simply repeat again the Belgian and Luxemburg follies of 1914 ! For that Holland, of all countries, is preparing to fall upon us, as the Belgians in August 1914 "did", nobody in his senses would believe !

A thundery atmosphere prevails here in Berlin. Prussia seems more stiff-necked after all than I had fancied, and Severing will not submit without a struggle to Papen's vigorous onslaught. The Chancellor is "indignant" ; he is all for starving Prussia out. The Reich is still in debt to Prussia to the tune of some 100 million marks ; Prussia needs this money to pay its Civil Servants, but Papen refuses to fork it out. Nice methods !

The Braun Government is becoming "energetic" ; it is resolved to protest (of course it will be bankrupt before the protest is ever heard of). These fools !

As if in such matters there was ever a case for "justice" !

Schleicher is very grave. He is very apprehensive of the future. Gradually he is beginning to understand the stew he has got himself and others into with this Papen of "his".

*11th July, 1932.*

The difficulties in Prussia mount. The problem is becoming acute. And the Prime Minister, Braun, is on holiday, nursing his sick wife, as *Vorwärts*<sup>1</sup> so touchingly puts it. The man must have a nerve to dare to slide out of his responsibilities now of all times. It's the most despicable desertion in face of the enemy, however touchingly he may cloak it.

The Social Democrats look on quite calmly, of course, and see nothing wrong with the arrangement. Well, what else could one expect ? To bring a deserter to justice would have smacked of "militarism". And one mustn't have anything to do with that. These imbeciles !

*12th July, 1932.*

This evening Papen gave a little party, mainly for Army men, at the Herren Club. Besides myself, there were Schleicher, Hammerstein, Blomberg,<sup>2</sup> Rundstedt, Seeckt, Hindenburg junior, Oldenburg-

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<sup>1</sup> The chief newspaper of the Social Democratic Party. Suppressed by the Nazi Government, now published in Prague.

<sup>2</sup> General Oberst Baron von Blomberg, Commander of the East Prussian Military District ; appointed Minister of Defence in the Hitler Cabinet.



Januschau, Bracht,<sup>1</sup> and a few others. Meissner was conspicuous by his absence.

It was all stupendously solemn. After a very good dinner, Papen pledged each of us by a handclasp to secrecy. Then he seated himself in the posture he has made his own by this time (Goltz would burst with envy if he could see him—and were still alive!) and gave an address on the political situation.

The chief obstacle on the path of Germany's recovery, said Papen, was the existence of two parallel governments, that of the Reich and that of Prussia. Everything that he tried to do was imperilled if not sabotaged by the Prussian Government; and, unfortunately, in essential things he was bound to have the co-operation or at least the neutrality of Prussia. He, the Chancellor, had racked his brains for weeks to find some way in which this question of two parallel and counter governments could be settled without loss of prestige. And the more he reflected upon it the more drawn he felt towards the solution which the former Reichs President, Ebert,<sup>2</sup> had come to in the year 1923 when faced with the Red Governments in Saxony and Thuringia, the solution by means of a Reichs Executive.

Before his accession to office Papen had once hinted at this method in an interview with Hindenburg; but the Old Gentleman had had constitutional scruples and expressed doubt whether the celebrated

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Franz Bracht, Burgomaster of Essen, appointed Deputy-Commissioner of Prussia by von Papen, July 1932. Under Schleicher, Minister of Interior as well.

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich Ebert, Trade Union leader and Social Democratic Deputy in the Reichstag during the War. Succeeded Prince Max of Baden as Imperial Chancellor and formed the Provisional Government in November 1918. First President of the German Reich. Died in 1925.

48th article of the constitution gave him the right to take such a measure. Accordingly, to dissipate Hindenburg's scruples and secure himself, the Chancellor instructed an authority in constitutional law, Professor Schmitt,<sup>1</sup> to go into the question and give him a considered opinion. This *exposé* was not yet available, it was true ; but Professor Schmitt had fundamentally affirmed the legal competence of the Reich to depose governments in the subsidiary States. It all depended on the motivation ; that was to say, on the "subjective" attitude of the President.

He, Papen, desired to tell us all this now, as it was not impossible that developments might follow rapidly and the Cabinet be forced any day to extraordinary decisions and measures. But for that he must know that he had the "assembled" leaders of the Reichswehr at his back. He begged us to declare ourselves.

Embarrassed silence on every side. Only Oldenburg grinned. After quite a long pause Schleicher began :

He could not conceive that Braun and Severing would vacate the field without putting up a very serious resistance and raising a considerable row. They would have to reckon upon the outbreak of open war between the forces of the Reich and Prussia. But that would be a confoundedly uncertain business ; Prussia was quite capable of delaying the decision until the Reich's resistance was broken by a general strike. They must not deceive

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<sup>1</sup> Professor of Jurisprudence in the University of Cologne.

themselves ; there was no doubt whatever that such a general strike would fuse the Social Democrats and the Communists together for good or evil ; but with that fusion the fratricidal struggle between the workers, which had served the Right Wing's interests so well, would be abolished, and that was something to be avoided at all costs.

One could count on the Steel Helmets, certainly, but one simply knew nothing about the Nazis. And even if they were to come over to Papen's side, they would be more than cancelled out by the infinitely superior rank and file of the Reichs Banner and the "forbidden" Red Front organizations.

One could not depend just now upon the peasants, especially in the low-lying regions, where the harvest work was just beginning. The decision would take place in the large towns. To count on anything else was a vain delusion.

He, Schleicher, therefore, warned them urgently and in all seriousness against an experiment which, at least for the present, was pregnant with extraordinary risks and dangers, and whose outcome in all human probability would be negative rather than positive. He did not propose to say anything of his still graver political apprehensions ; he would bring that matter forward at the next meeting of the Cabinet. He was also astonished that the Chancellor had brought up this whole question at such a gathering instead of in the Cabinet, where by its very nature it should obviously be considered first of all.

Papen broke in, clearly very much hurt by Schleicher's criticism. It seemed to him, he said,

that he had been utterly misunderstood. He would therefore repeat (what he had never said till then !) that he had not been speaking at all in his capacity as Chancellor, but rather as a member of the political committee of the Herren Club. And none of his present hearers would dare to gainsay that the problem in question was pre-eminently and peculiarly the concern of the Herren Club ; the interposition of the Cabinet, as he conceived the matter with a full sense of his duties, was the *second act* which should follow as soon as they had attained clarity and agreement here.

Besides, Schleicher seemed to underestimate considerably the present political tensions, which were seeking urgently for a discharge. There was no time left now for dallying. The reports from the great landed estates, with which the President and he himself were being literally bombarded, were calamitous and called almost imperiously for immediate action. It was, of course, obvious, yet he felt it his duty to emphasize that they could not and would not justify that proposed policy by the claims of particular interests such as the landed proprietors, no matter how well-grounded these were. But that should cause no difficulty : "Reasons exist so that one may avail oneself of them at need, when one has none !"

Nor was he disposed to admit the justice of Schleicher's military apprehensions. There was not the slightest doubt of the Reichswehr's superiority over the Prussian Police forces, if only for the reason that the majority of the police officers were inclined

to the Right, or were at least likely to waver at the decisive moment. Consequently he, Papen, did not reckon in the least with these conflicts, but was convinced, on the contrary, that Braun and Severing might be furious and abusive, yet would knuckle under.

Papen finished and sat back triumphantly.

Nobody else spoke. Papen, once more quite the grand seigneur, closed the conference and the jollity began. But it did not come to much ; I really think I scarcely spoke three words.

After the party I walked back for a short distance with Rundstedt. Unlike myself, he is filled with admiration for the plan and for Papen. The whole business seems strange to me. I have a feeling that things have already gone farther than Papen admits, and that Rundstedt himself knows more than he considers it expedient to say.

Well, we shall see. I shan't lose my sleep over it in any case.

*13th July, 1932.*

Yesterday (Sunday) witnessed a horrible butchery in Altona.<sup>1</sup> Seventeen dead ! The Nazis, making a demonstration, had, of course, to march through the working quarter, of all places ! As might have been foreseen, there were clashes ; the workers rushed the procession and scattered it ; the police intervened and fired.

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<sup>1</sup> Despite warnings that bloodshed would follow, Nazi Storm Troops marched, with bands playing and banners flying, through the Communist quarter of Altona, a suburb of Hamburg. Shots were fired from the roofs and many casualties resulted.

The attitude of the Chief of the Police, a Social Democrat, is incomprehensible, even criminal ; he expressly authorized the Brown Shirts to march through streets where only workmen live. And he did this although he was urgently warned from every side, even by the Reichswehr in Altona. Of course he knew better ; when has one of these petty despots ever not known better ?

And to-day, after a dozen and a half human beings have been shot down in the street through his fault, to-day he has the cheek to claim, and to say it to the newspaper reporters too, that he "has only fulfilled his duty". And : "The workers must not disturb a procession authorized by me. Where should we be if such things were allowed !"

Hopeless, these fellows ! He claims to have fulfilled his duty ? No, it wasn't that ; it's the mortal fear of a petty spirit before the lowering brows of the Nazis, the cowardice of a wretched nobody that has caused these orgies. Seventeen dead ! He can't argue that away, no matter what beautiful theories about the "State" and "discipline" he may trump up afterwards.

The attitude of the official representatives of the Social Democrats is classic, as ever : "The Communists defied the authority of the State !" And who told these clever poltroons that it was only Communists ? I hope with all my heart that Social Democratic workmen had a hand in scattering that brown-shirted mob. Who gave Herr Wels the right to defame his own people so persistently ? He wished to "prevent worse evils" and protect "the authority

of the State". A fine authority! And if he goes on like this the worst evil of all will soon triumph and the dear soul will have at last, at long last, his well-earned rest.

To-morrow arrive Schleicher's personal and confidential agents in the Prussian Army command. Schleicher, who is deeply worried by Papen's folly, lays much weight on finding out the attitude of the rank and file. He has also sent to Hindenburg a long and excellent report, outlining the Papen plan and his own apprehensions. He warns Hindenburg in urgent terms against the consequences which will automatically follow if the old fellow allows himself to be led and driven any longer by a pack of gamblers. And he has almost implored the President to leave the Reichswehr, at least, out of the political game.

Herr Papen is putting himself to great pains to convert us. And how naïvely he goes about it! Genuine Papen! So to-day he has sent us, by the hand of a real State Councillor, a fat bundle of papers containing hundreds of letters in which large land-proprietors complain of Prussia on the lying pretext that the East German Relief Fund<sup>1</sup> is being sabotaged. Sabotage, that is their term for the natural fact that the more responsible officials in

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<sup>1</sup> The *Ost-Hilfe* was a fund established by Dr. Brüning to preserve the financial stability of agriculture in Eastern Germany and, when necessary, to liquidate uneconomic and bankrupt estates, of which there were many. The fund, however, became more and more a source of income for the landed proprietors, and their depredations grew to such dimensions that a special Reichstag commission of enquiry was set up during the Papen régime. General von Schleicher, when Chancellor, threatened to publish the findings of this commission, and it was this more than anything else that impelled the great landed proprietors to support Papen in putting Hitler in power. After the Nazi Revolution the report of the enquiry was suppressed.

Prussia refuse to fling Government millions into the jaws of bankrupts without further enquiry! The whole business (all concocted, of course, one can see that at the first glance) looks quite genuine and relatively convincing. But they needn't have spurred themselves to concoct it for Schleicher's sake or mine ; we know our feudal Papen brood.

Schleicher laughed at the rubbish. He is going to initiate an enquiry into the administration of the East German Relief, this "Salvation Army for decayed Junkers" as he calls it, on his own account. He fancies that the results of his enquiry will be somewhat different from what Papen's documents try to make out.

*14th July, 1932.*

It never rains but it pours! As if at the word of command, dozens of threatening letters are arriving from "highly placed" and, of course, "responsible and nationalist" land-owners, calling upon Schleicher to "sweep Prussia clean with an iron broom".

Papen has managed this campaign of protest too clumsily ; it almost reminds one of his diplomacy in Washington of blessed memory.

The conference with our confidential agents was significant and valuable. Papen's agents in Prussia have also been trying to play their little game, of course, but they have almost everywhere been cold-shouldered, except by those who are connected by blood with the large estate owners. And that is the strange thing : officers who have no prospect of ever



owning the family estate in their lives are the most furious defenders of the large landed interests. A queer kind of inferiority complex, strengthened still further by the fact that in normal times they would not even be acknowledged socially by the turnip-headed Junkers. Germans, especially "better class" Germans, have something of the fawning dog in them !

All things considered, the temper of Prussia is good. The people don't want to have much to do with the Nazis. And they all warn us against violating the constitution ; in such a case one could put only a conditional reliance on the Reichswehr, which usually can be depended on to obey orders. But in Prussia they are "convinced" that Hindenburg would never permit a *coup d'état* from above ; he sincerely intends to keep his oath to support the constitution. These innocent angels, these romancers ! A Hindenburg oath ! What does that amount to ?

In the afternoon (I had just returned to my office) the Crown Prince paid me a visit unannounced. He did not say that he had come at Papen's instigation, but that was clear from the start. "Quite parenthetically" he spoke of Prussia and of the necessity for the setting up of a new Government there "allied" to the Papen Cabinet, "if the German nation were not to be rent asunder". These people are really funny ! They talk about the German people and really mean nothing more than themselves and their particular interests, and, above all, Prussia, and there again only the eastern part of Prussia.



DR. OTTO MEISSNER  
Secretary of State to the President of the Reich.



I treated His Imperial Highness, who began to show remarkable zeal for his proposals, with the respect which was his due, but did not respond to his attempt to pump me. Visibly piqued, he very soon excused himself.

In the evening a breath of fresh air again ; St—— came to see me. After all the dissimulation and fraud of the last few days a reasonable talk at last. Naturally, we talked chiefly of the present burning questions.

He told me straight out that Papen was planning a violent stroke against Prussia. At my astonished question how he knew that, he replied modestly that any student of politics who could put two and two together was quite capable of deducing it. And then he justified his assumption. Justified ? It would be truer to say that he proved its truth.

On the whole, he fears that the Social Democrat pundits will attempt nothing against a Papen coup except to let loose a flood of paper protests in bad German. "These gentlemen will wait to see if things aren't going to get still worse. They call that strategy and statesmanship !" I can't believe that he's right ; the pressure from beneath must surely take effect some time and sweep these wretched figureheads away.

Then he outlined to me a comprehensively conceived plan for the creation of a great popular Socialist movement, calculated to split the ranks of the Nazis and win over the Reichswehr. "Solidarity between the masses and the Army, seizure and division of the great landed estates", these were the more essential heads of the programme. The plan would

be a brilliant one—if it were not for the Social Democratic Party. For such a campaign, which runs counter to the whole existing state of things, they haven't the necessary resolution ; and even if they were ever driven to it by circumstances, they would certainly drop it again like hot coals next day. The Social Democrats have only one way of combating difficulties : by denying their existence.

Finally, he kept me up late into the night with a brilliant analysis of the question : "What would have become of Europe if France had won in 1870 ?" He is convinced that the victory of Germany has been calamitous for Germany and for Europe, and is daily becoming more and more so. I was not in a position to contradict or even refute him.

He has already told me that he hates Prussia. But why he hates it, why every thinking man indeed must hate it, has only now become clear to me. There is no getting over it : as long as Prussia exists there will be no peace and no lasting progress in Europe. The present state of things proves that with dreadful urgency.

And I say this too as a German General. If only others could and would think the same !

There's a Cabinet meeting to-day. I am eager to learn what will happen. Schleicher has told me to come and see him first thing to-morrow.

*15th July, 1932.*

At the Cabinet meeting everything in the garden was lovely. Papen went the whole hog. He felt

damned sure of his rôle ; the reason for that was soon forthcoming.

The coup against Prussia is a settled thing. Papen had the wholehearted support of Braun (the Minister of Agriculture and Herren Clubman. No wonder ! ) and Warmbold,<sup>1</sup> who represents the interests of the chemical industry in the Agrarian Party. Schleicher was immovably against, and repeated his arguments all over again.

He must have spoken well and convincingly. In any case his arguments made a deep impression on the others, and Papen's chances fell rapidly. Then came the trump card : Hindenburg junior got up and announced that the Old Gentleman insisted on having the Prussian Government driven out. In his own words : "The Reichs President informs the Cabinet that he insists that final and decisive measures should be taken to save agriculture from being ruined by the Marxists. And that can only be achieved by a Cabinet of the Right in Prussia !"

Tableau ! The Marxists are now fortunately responsible for the gaming debts of the Junkers, for their incompetence and for the complete bankruptcy of Neudeck. They must be confoundedly influential people, these Marxists !

Schleicher then put the categorical question whether any actual agreement with Herr Hitler existed to this effect. Papen maintained an embarrassed silence, but Hindenburg junior, without stirring an eyelash, stated that the Prussian plan

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<sup>14</sup> Professor Warmbold, Minister of Economic Affairs in the Papen and Schleicher Cabinets.

represented part of a larger programme already agreed upon between the National Socialists and the confidential advisers of the President. So that was that.

I simply can't understand the world any longer. So as to stop the insatiable maws of the Junkers, the old man cold-bloodedly breaks his oath to the constitution, calls the despicable farce "his duty to the nation", and next Sunday will certainly bow his venerable head in church "in reverence" before his "German" God. And that is our ruler!

Schleicher is almost broken down. He can no longer see any possibility of taking effectual steps against these crimes and these criminals. But he too is a trimmer of the first order. His post is dearer to him than his honesty. One can't touch pitch and not be defiled: one can't dabble in intrigue and not pay for it.

Another thing symptomatic of our "great" age: to-day I had a visit from Baron "A", the naval commander. He had his visit announced a couple of days ago through the Naval Board. An interesting man with superlative connections; he plays a prominent part in the Navy and was, as far as I know, a naval attaché before the War.

As for the purpose of his visit: he had just come from Munich, where he had had long consultations with Hitler, and was on his way to Doorn, where he fulfilled the rôle of honorary aide-de-camp.

He then went on to speak of the "Fatherland's" need and of the necessity for a "strong hand", which "alone could master the situation", and, to be effective, must stand above party politics. Only a

monarchy could provide this "strong hand". For that reason the re-establishment of the Hohenzollern dynasty had now become a question of life or death for the German people.

Thanks to his peculiarly confidential relations with the Imperial Family, he had been able to draw up the following provisional plan with the help of certain former comrades in the Navy : on a day still to be decided the German fleet would steam out into the North Sea and "fetch" the German Emperor back. On his arrival at Wilhelmshaven, the latter would make a proclamation to his people declaring that "responsible men and women of every political colour had summoned him to direct the further destiny of the German nation".

Then Papen would retire, Hindenburg would convey all his powers to Wilhelm, and a new Government with a General as Chancellor would be set up. A formal proclamation of Wilhelm as Emperor would not follow for some time. No difficulties need be anticipated. The plan was a 99 to 1 certainty. The Kaiser could proceed to a Dutch watering-place at any time he liked, and from there it was no distance across the Dutch frontier. My visitor considered that international complications were out of the question.

The plan had been accepted for the Navy. He came now to beg me to give him a similar assurance for the Army and General Schleicher, so that he might communicate it to the Kaiser.

I asked at once if the President knew of this project and where he stood in regard to it. "A"



said that he had discussed the matter exhaustively with someone very high up. The latter was in favour of it, considered the plan a brilliant one, but pleaded urgently that the President should not be prematurely informed of it. He was assured, however, that there was no doubt of the old man's agreement if he were confronted by an accomplished fact.

I then asked about the Nazis' attitude to this highly absurd project. "A" replied significantly that he had just come from Munich. They were completely prepared to support the plan if the Reichswehr would collaborate too. All that they asked was that Hitler should be Chancellor. There could be a General as Vice-Chancellor, and they were perfectly prepared to accept Papen as Foreign Minister.

I confined myself to informing "A" that I would make a note of his suggestions and lay them before my chief. I asked him to be good enough to call again in two days. He enquired whether it would not be better for him to lay the whole matter before General Schleicher himself. I replied that I would also lay this request before my chief.

After that we parted, quite in a friendly spirit, as politeness demanded. But when the "honorary aide-de-camp" was gone, I could not help thinking of the words of one of my regimental commanders when I was a subaltern: "When a man's going mad it begins in his head".

Schleicher will almost die of laughter when I "lay" this rubbish before him. Duty is duty!

16th July, 1932.

Schleicher is furious over "A" and his proposals. He refused to receive the man, and instructed me to inform him of that in writing. Which was done as a matter of duty (but not without a quiet satisfaction).

It seems that the fateful Prussian *coup* is dated to start very soon, in any case before the Reichstag elections. Schleicher summoned Hammerstein and myself for a consultation to-day, discussed one or two trifling matters, and then gave instructions that two battalions of infantry from South Germany were immediately to be transferred to Döberitz and to remain stationed there until further notice. Fully equipped for action, at the express command of Hindenburg.

On our own initiative we have once more sent strict instructions to various commands to keep a sharp eye open for any concentrations of National Socialist forces, and to take armed action against all anti-constitutional experiments, if these people should attempt them.

At a small evening party I met Herr Goering, who had just returned from an electoral campaign. Quite casually I asked him how things were likely to go on the 31st of July. He replied smilingly: "Bon! Meissner has given me his word that he will bundle the old man off to Neudeck during the critical days, so that he mightn't be in the way or be able to do anything while we twist this so-called con-

stitution a little more to our liking. You know that I've always been for leaving him as much as possible out of the game. He shouldn't have too much laid upon him, but he mustn't be given a handle either to intervene as his oath requires him to. Accomplished facts ; that's what he needs !''

I was horrified. All sorts of people were standing round, actually two foreign diplomatists among them. If all this were to appear to-morrow in the foreign Press, of course it would be another canard and the other side would be the liars. It's well known that we never lie, for, of course, we are "German".

Altogether, it's disgusting the way this fellow speaks about things which cause us the deepest anxiety. He plays away the destiny and the existence of a people as if he were sitting at a gaming-table. A pure gambler.

*17th July, 1932.*

Invited to lunch at the "Schwarzer Ferkel"<sup>1</sup> by Oskar Hindenburg. The usual lot, just as if one were in the Herren Club, which was strongly represented. Lots of grumbling ; otherwise nothing of importance.

*18th July, 1932.*

Meissner has returned from Neudeck quite exhausted. The Agrarian Party, reinforced by a posse of princes and a whole legion of ex-officers, are

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<sup>1</sup> A well-known wine restaurant in the Dorotheenstrasse in Berlin. It was a favourite haunt of Bismarck's, and has been the scene of many political intrigues.

simply overrunning the Old Gentleman. All with the same parrot cry : Away with the Prussian Government. Besides, the old man has long since made up his mind and has already signed the emergency decree. The bomb is due to go off on the 20th of July.

Meissner seems to be depressed. Under the pressure of Hindenburg's colleagues of the Green Front,<sup>1</sup> and pushed from behind by Hitler, he has apparently ventured much too far forward. If the coup fails it will cost him his neck. But of course the Old Gentleman will survive, whatever happens !

I can no longer see how the affair is likely to develop. If Severing and Braun put up a resistance (and they'll do it too !), then the chances of the Papen crowd should be considerably less than their boasted 51 per cent. I simply can't understand how anybody in his senses can anticipate anything else.

My friend St—— is coming to see me again. I rang him up, but he has to attend a meeting outside the town ; he will be here, however, shortly after midnight.

Three hours later. I'm beginning to feel somewhat more cheerful. I want to set down the decisive part of our interview from the notes I took, just as it happened.

*I.* Do you know the latest ?

*He.* Surely. Papen is going to let fly. And he'll have to be quick about it if he wants to be in time.

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<sup>1</sup> The Bismarck League, of which Dr. Hugenberg was the head, wore green shirts and were the supporters of a strong agricultural party. They were suppressed by Hitler in July 1933.

*I.* You talk almost as if you wanted him to succeed !

*He.* Want him to succeed ? Not I. Want him to let fly ? Certainly. Things are ripe for a decisive move. For my party this is the hour of destiny, the turning point of fate. The existing political system has lost its meaning and petrified into mere habit ; it has led us to a dead end. We can't get any further with it. The new Reichstag will only produce a negative majority ; it isn't hard to foretell that with absolute certainty. A normal Government, that is to say, in the language of our glorious generation, a democratic Parliamentary Government, is out of the question. So something has got to happen ! Anyone who sticks to the "principle" in spite of everything is a fool or a coward. The principle exists after all not for its own sake, but for the sake of progress.

*I.* What do people think about it in your party ?

*He.* Think ? I don't know whether one can dignify it by the name of "thinking". They reverence the constitution and defend every iota of it as a lioness defends her cubs, although they know quite well that it has become impossible in essential points. I spoke to Breitscheid<sup>1</sup> again a few days ago about this, and I've been bombarding the party executive for weeks with proposals and suggestions, and

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Rudolf Breitscheid, Chairman of the Social Democratic Parliamentary Party till 1933. Fled to England after the Nazi Revolution,

sketches of a modified constitution, and so on. And what do they say? "We cannot and we dare not at this moment proclaim that the constitution is no longer adequate. A burden like that is too much to lay on the shoulders of our followers, whom we have educated to respect the constitutional basis of the State." That's the answer I got in varying forms from various people; the gist of it was always the same. Nobody denies that the Weimar system will be a sheer impossibility after the 31st of July. But Breitscheid coolly remarks that there are different times coming yet! He may be right. But the present, after all, is the present. And it's in the present that we need a Government!

*I.* And what will happen now?

*He.* Power, which has been vilified so much, has become primary again. The only question now is whether Papen is to seize the power, or we, or some third party. That's the sole point at issue. And as from years of painful experience I don't have any confidence in my friends' taking the initiative, I welcome Papen's move, which will compel us to take up the gauntlet. Or to declare ourselves bankrupt once and for all! The great ordeal by fire is coming. Not for Herr Papen and his lot; they'll vanish into thin air sooner or later. No, for Social Democracy.

*I.* If you were Prime Minister of Prussia and

learned to-night that Papen was going to attempt a coup, shall we say to-morrow or the next day, what would you do ? Or would you consider the fight lost already ?

*He.* Lost ? By no means ! I would arrest Papen and the whole pack of you, arm the Reichs Banner and the Red Front Fighting League,<sup>1</sup> proclaim a general strike and carry it through no matter what happened, issue strict emergency decrees, reserve the radio for myself and invite the Reichswehr to join me or else give up their arms. Within twelve hours the whole business would be settled and a dictatorship of workmen and soldiers established in power. That would be my programme, in its external form. Tell me, if you can, that I couldn't carry it out !

*I.* I can only refute you by repeating your own admission. With the argument that the Social Democratic Party is incapable of making such an effort, although the powers to carry it out are there and only wait for the word.

*He.* You're right there. But that is the one and only argument against it. All the same, the effort must be made. If the result is negative, the Social Democratic Party and the free trade unions won't have lost very much, considering their present state.

*I.* But the loss of these positions in Prussia would surely mean a fatal blow to your party ?

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<sup>1</sup> The militant organization of the Communist Party.

*He.* Probably the destruction of an illusion. But nothing more. Prussia has never been to me an end in itself—simply a means to let a few Social Democratic officials obtain well-paid and prominent posts. And as the distribution of economic power stands at present, we in Prussia have no trumps in our hand except those we can secure by extra parliamentary means, by exerting real power. You know the position in Prussia. And you know that in effect we are only tolerated there now. Not because the others have been too strong for us ; no, simply because we are too cowardly and too irresolute and not sufficiently aware of our real strength. I must say, our own ministers have done their best to drive all consciousness of power out of our heads. A few weeks more and Papen won't even need to make a coup ; it will be sufficient to issue a "provisional injunction" against the Prussian Ministry ! Any backwood Pomeranian judge will provide you with the stuff. And Papen won't need to give himself the trouble of running to Neudeck and his friend Oldenburg any longer ; he can simply send the bailiffs to put official seals on the ministers' doors. You see, one can't go on pursuing a half-and-half policy for fifteen years without paying for it. Papen may be a dilettante, or a criminal for all I care ; in any case he has made up his mind to gain power and does not let trifles deter him, or beautiful theories that have



shrunk to irrelevancy in times like these. But, as I say, the ordeal by fire must be gone through. Now or never !

*I.* Then go to your friends and tell them that Papen intends to strike within forty-eight hours.

*He.* Thank you.

This was the gist of our conversation. Now I really feel in good spirits again and full of hope.

Everything can yet be saved !

*19th July, 1932.*

Great excitement ! The Prussian Government is due to be deposed to-morrow. If it does not go voluntarily, martial law is threatened.

Schleicher and Hammerstein have fought tooth and nail against this business, but the Old Gentleman insists. "There must be no more half-and-half measures," said young Hindenburg, reporting his father's words. General Rundstedt has been given provisional instructions, in case of complications arising. Otherwise the Reichswehr will not be drawn into the conflict if possible ; we have achieved that much.

Schleicher is more sceptical than I've ever seen him, and keeps on warning the others. I don't believe that the affair will work out according to programme. Braun and Severing will never be so foolish and despicable as to strike their flag without a struggle, compromise their cause for ever and deal such a deadly blow to the reasonable enough hopes of the workers !

I wonder if my friend has achieved anything ? No sign from the Prussian side, not a single word. These gentlemen are still lapped, it seems, in their usual profound peace, although they must surely know by now that their house is afire and blazing at all four corners !

Oldenburg, the whipper-in, is running from State department to State department, on the other hand, to make certain that the Prussian goose is well cooked.

If the Reds had only the faintest notion on what a shaky basis Papen and the whole of his circus are standing ! A puff would blow the whole card-house to smithereens.

Grave reports come from Munich, Stuttgart, and the Rhineland. At any rate, the South Germans seem resolved not to stomach a *coup* by East Prussians. And under Papen's direction least of all.

*20th July, 1932.*

The Prussian Government has decided to sit tight and wait on the event ! Just after breakfast I received a hopeless letter from my friend. They mean to wait, to wait until Papen takes the first "illegal" step ! Papen will do that all right ! And this very day ! And what will these fine Social Democrats do then ? From what I know of them, they'll go on waiting until Papen takes the second step, and the third step, and so on in the same style !

My friend has advised them at least to transfer the seat of the Prussian Government immediately to Cologne, in the demilitarized zone ; there's no martial

law there and resistance could be organized. A feeble way out ! Still, better all the same than weakly to capitulate here. But, of course, this plan has no point unless these gentlemen are prepared for war to the knife. And that hardly seems to be the case !

(Night.) It isn't believable ! The Papen coup has completely succeeded. The Prussian Government has allowed itself to be swept away. The leaders have announced that they will "defend themselves". But not to-day and not to-morrow. In a few weeks ! Long after the coup has become accepted as the *status quo* ! And before the Supreme Court, of all places ! These courageous pundits are going to turn a fight for political power into an action for civil rights to be heard before a judge !

It's enough to make one weep ! So this is all that Severing amounts to ! This is Otto Braun, the red czar of Prussia !

I'm sorry, sorry to the depths of my heart, for the faithful, only too faithful rank and file behind these wretched "officers". It was worth while to see how they linked up in the streets and waited for the word of command to release them, joyously prepared for any intervention ! But the word remained unsaid. Their leaders were half dead with funk ! The faith these men have squandered and the hopes they have destroyed to-day can never be made good again.

All in all, Severing cut a wretched figure. First he decided like a man to yield only to force, but then he cheapened himself, cheapened himself miserably, so as "to avoid bloodshed". Of course, no coward in the history of the world has ever surrendered without



DR. HEINRICH BRÜNING  
Formerly Reichs-Chancellor and Foreign Minister.



invariably finding some moral cloak to fling round his ignominious shoulders. And then later on he struts about as a martyr !

At any rate, Severing retired into his private apartments like an offended prima donna and left the chances of battle to others without any sign of jealousy.

The only man who showed any morale was the Police Commander, Heimannsberg. He was willing to act, but he could not. His chiefs had decided otherwise. And the Prussian police ? Men stood with tears in their eyes, Captain Hauffe<sup>1</sup> has told me, while their wretched "superiors" evacuated the fortress. Incomprehensible, this surrender ! These fellows would be put up against a wall, if things were as they should be. Their own followers should have taken and shot them !

The Social Democratic Party have produced another brilliant turn. This morning *Vorwärts* was still shrieking that the Papen Plan meant a *coup d'état*, and threatening that the Social Democrats would fearlessly combat it "with every means" at their disposal. A few hours later the Communists called a general strike against Papen, and the hearts of the whole Social Democratic Party sank to their boots. They distributed millions of pamphlets declaring that "the Communist demand for a strike has been deliberately engineered by the Hitlerites as an act of provocation" ! Besides, an appeal had been laid before the Supreme Courts, and everybody

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<sup>1</sup> Officer of the Reichswehr in charge of operations.

should wait for that to be decided and return peacefully to their houses.

And let the last hope go hang ! I feel sick to the heart.

*21st July, 1932.*

The final shock that caused the complete collapse of the Socialists was apparently, of all things, the preposterous rumour that whole regiments of artillery were concentrated round Berlin merely waiting for the signal to open fire and enter the capital of Germany. These strategists in Lindenstrasse<sup>1</sup> must indeed be feeble-minded ! In the first place, no artillery was concentrated. In the second, even if the Social Democrats' belief had been true, a bombardment of Berlin would, of course, have been a military impossibility ; for on what could one fire ? Straight into the town ? And for what purpose ? Thirdly, such a bombardment would be impossible as well from the standpoint of foreign policy. One can't lay the Wilhelmstrasse in ruins without the foreign embassies getting a splinter or two as well. (Rudolf Breitscheid, who is generally clever enough, might surely have thought of that.) And fourthly, the idea of an artillery regiment entering a huge city ! It would be the best and cheapest way of getting rid of all its guns without being able to let off a single shot !

But that is what people call politics here ! If they had only first asked an averagely intelligent

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<sup>1</sup>The Berlin Headquarters of the Social Democrats was in the Lindenstrasse.

private ! He would have laughed at them and revealed the great truth that the whole thing was a vamped-up scare. And these were the very Socialist bosses who went about saying that Generals are stupid by profession ! That may be true (exceptions only prove the rule. Granted !); but in any case it is equally true that the Social Democrats are very often very stupid. By party profession.

All the same, not too stupid to invent promptly after the event a new theory for the admiring populace, proving that they were not stupid at all, but marvellously clever, that they were not cowardly, but had acted as "responsible servants of the State". And that, besides, they had acted entirely under compulsion !

These poor, non-existent big guns ! They made history yesterday. The world has never before seen such a shameful and ignominious surrender !

So Papen is now, incidentally as it were, Prime Minister of Prussia. Bracht has been given the Ministry of Home Affairs. The proclamation justifying the coup is the most inaccurate document I have ever seen, or that Hindenburg has ever signed (excepting, of course, his despatches in the Great War). Abegg of all people, that timid, harmless man, is said to have conspired with the Communists !

Rundstedt does not feel comfortable in his rôle. He was here a little while ago imploring me to try to get his provisional commission withdrawn again as soon as possible.

And Schleicher ? He seems to have aged by several years. Since Papen's diagnosis has proved



right and the Socialists have forsaken their flag, Papen's position is strengthened enormously and Schleicher is tottering.

The South Germans are protesting. Herr Hitler is jubilant, and Oldenburg is junketing to-day at Papa Hindenburg's.

*22nd July, 1932.*

The Old Gentleman is growing impatient. He "requests" that "suitable" emergency measures should be taken at once to better the position of the starving agrarians.

The old man is neither sentimental nor burdened with fine feelings. If only the nation and the people in other countries knew what is hidden behind his fine façade and how his "Prussian simplicity" looks at close quarters ! It's enough to make one vomit.

Who will really hold the reins now in Germany ? Who is honest enough, and at the same time resolute and man enough to do it ? The one party have the strength, but are scoundrels, and the others are honest enough, but frightened to death of accepting responsibility. A third class, possessing both qualities, courage and character, I can't see, at any rate in the sphere of high politics. We military people ? Yes. But what do we know of the *métier* ? Schleicher is certainly a politician who understands the logic of power. But he can only add up : bayonets, parliamentary majorities, trade union memberships. Besides, economic and, above all, psychological factors are to him the "imponderables" of an alien

world, which remain for ever locked to him because of his upbringing and temperament. He knows that too, and admits it quite blatantly. And that is the real reason for his objection to taking any public part in affairs.

The training school for the Steel Helmets in Döberitz, which I inspected to-day for a few hours, is getting on very nicely. Splendid material ; more than half of them are old soldiers, some of them with a long experience of front-line fighting. And our worries over their equipment, Adam now reports, are finally over, and there are quite sufficient machine-guns.

One of the new tanks was tried out. An excellent contrivance. Can do up to fifty miles on a good road, and up to from thirty-four to thirty-seven across country. Ordinary obstacles, ridges, or sandy ground, do not put it out. The big guns can shoot with great accuracy even when it is moving, and the four machine-guns are splendidly mounted and have a first-class range. A few hundred more of these things, then the French and the Poles can . . . !

A victorious atmosphere rules in the Herren Club, just like after the conquest of Antwerp. Well, they have every reason to congratulate themselves. They prophesy that Hitler will double his poll ; the Social Democrats and Communists will lose badly, they think.

Invited to Oskar Hindenburg's to-morrow.

*23rd July, 1932.*

The Social Democrats are a pathetic lot. They intend to give Herr von Papen "the answer he deserves" by means of "the election returns". Fantastic fools! First an appeal to the law, and then voting-papers! As if with paper resolutions one could fight and overcome a pestilence that threatens the life and future of the nation!

Now that the lawful continuity of Government has been interrupted, Papen will not give way even to a Red majority in parliament. And these gentlemen may allow me to put them a modest question: Do they actually reckon on a Social Democratic majority? I reckon, myself, that the election results for the Social Democrats will reflect the Social Democratic achievements of the 20th of July!

In Geneva yesterday all sorts of things were happening. Nadolny<sup>1</sup> made a brilliant speech and submitted the whole Disarmament Conference to sharp criticism. The fight for equal rights for Germany seems to have reached the acute stage. If we didn't always have to be so apprehensive of indiscretions! One never knows whether somebody may not come out with a staggering pronouncement tomorrow and all our cards be revealed. Too many

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<sup>1</sup>Herr Rudolf Nadolny, formerly Ambassador to Turkey, leader of the German delegation to the Disarmament Conference of 1932-1933, now Ambassador to the Soviet Union. The speech referred to was that in which Herr Nadolny rejected the Conference Resolution of July 23 on the ground that it made no attempt to meet Germany's demands for equality in armaments. This was followed by Germany's first withdrawal from the Disarmament Conference.

people are initiated into these delicate affairs. It's to be hoped that they will all keep mum.

In the evening at Oskar Hindenburg's. Almost all the Cabinet seemed to be there, and a few Generals as well. Oskar was squeaking with delight and Papen was accepting general adulation. After dinner (a very good one too) we lords of creation proceeded to the smoking-room, and Papen outlined yet another new plan. After the election he wants to make the Crown Prince Chancellor ; he himself taking the posts of Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister. Hitler should be given Prussia and the other States in the event of a majority for the Right and should the Centre Party agree to collaborate. After the formation of the new Government—dissolution of the Reichstag and election of a constitutional National Assembly by a restricted franchise. That is to say : single vote, no proportional representation, no franchise for anyone under twenty-five, voting public and compulsory. The new franchise is a matter that can be seriously discussed. I'm all for the abolition of the boy and girl franchise. But all the rest is rubbish. Pure Papen !

It seems that "A" has been whispering to more people than myself ; this suggestion about the Crown Prince smells very strongly of him.

*24th July, 1932.*

I have studied all the reports of the election speeches for the last two weeks. Awful, the dope that is being served out to the poor devils of voters !

Naturally, Herr Hitler takes the biscuit ! He makes the atmosphere almost explode with his windy nothings.

The Nazis are urging a furious battle against Papen. If their people only knew that the whole thing is only a lying manœuvre to cast dust in their eyes and that Papen is in reality only an agent of Hitler, they would sing a different tune, I fancy, from their everlasting ludicrous "Heil".

But the slave mentality has always been a national inheritance of ours. Foreigners are always deploring the mechanical obedience demanded from Germans, and forget that that has not been forced on the people by "militarism", but far rather springs from their innermost nature and seems self-evident to them. The German likes to have his nose rubbed in the dirt. Then he feels at his best, quite "at home". And secretly congratulates himself, and convinces himself that the other fellow has to bear all the responsibility ! A capable sergeant with an effective bark has more attraction for our people and is better loved than Goethe and Schiller put together.

*25th July, 1932.*

To-day the Government met the Senior Council of the Reichstag. It was only after a long and hard struggle that Schleicher consented to take part ; originally he was resolved that Papen and Gayl should "represent their silly nonsense" by themselves. Only at Hindenburg's expressed request did he consent to make a third,

Schleicher spoke only for a short time, and much to Papen's vexation. He regretted that the Reichswehr had been drawn into the conflict, and promised Herr Torgler<sup>1</sup> that the measures taken against the Communists would be dropped again to a great extent. Further, he declared expressively: "The Services will never consent to share their duties with anyone, no matter who he may be. They will proceed against anyone who dares to arrogate similar functions to himself."

The Nazis and the Right parties had not appeared. So it came about that all the proposals for rescinding the emergency decrees of 20th July were passed unanimously. The Government will whistle away these decisions, of course, as Gayl declared quite openly. Brazen violation of the constitution!

And the Social Democrats? They're waiting their time. Waiting for the breach of the constitution after the next! Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has declined to issue a provisional injunction against Papen at the request of Braun and Severing. That was only to be expected, and only the deposed ministers and the people in Lindenstrasse could have hoped for anything else. A pity that a man like Brecht should have to damage his reputation by being concerned in such futilities!

To keep us from losing our sense of humour: to-day a Councillor, hitherto an official in the

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<sup>1</sup> Ernst Torgler, leader of the Communist Party in the Reichstag. Arrested and charged with complicity in the Reichstag fire on the night of February 27, 1933. He was put on trial at Leipzig with the incendiary Van der Lubbe and three Bulgarians. He was acquitted on December 23, but was not released, being detained on a further charge of high treason in company with other leaders of the Communist Party.

Prussian State Ministry, arrived and faithfully delivered a protocol into our hands, "so that it mightn't fall into Herr von Papen's clutches and be lost to posterity." The gist of it is as follows : A few years ago, when Braun was still Prime Minister of Prussia, Franz von Papen sat in the Landtag as a member of the Centre Party. One day, after due announcement, he appeared in the State Ministry, and after a long preamble, in which he praised the virtues of the Braun Cabinet in glowing terms, he led the conversation to the post of Prussian Ambassador at Munich, recently fallen vacant. He, Papen, had heard of this, and he would "gladly" put himself at the Government's disposal. He could think of no pleasanter duty than to represent Herr Braun (whom he has just deposed !) at Munich. He drew attention to his qualifications, referred to his diplomatic career and declared that as a Papal Chamberlain and a financially independent Catholic aristocrat he was almost made for the post.

Braun kindly made a note of the proposal. He discussed the matter with his party, the Social Democrats, who agreed at once, as, of course, the post of Prussian envoy in Munich involved no political considerations. Braun thereupon spoke with Herr von Papen's own friends in the Centre Party. But Dr. Hess, the party leader in the Prussian Landtag, almost burst with rage when he heard of Papen's wishes and aspirations. According to the protocol, he declared that the transference of Papen would, it was true, be a brilliant move to get that *enfant terrible* of the party out of Berlin in a decent

manner ; but to send him to Munich was an impossible idea. He would damage the whole party irretrievably there. In short, Papen's plan was shipwrecked on the opposition of his own party friends. They seem to have known and valued him rightly.

*26th July, 1932.*

Martial law has been abolished, and Rundstedt is at peace again. Thank God !

Meeting of the Reichsrat to-day. A huge farce. Papen had nominated his private delegates to represent Prussia. But the old Prussian Government had nominated their former delegates too, so that Prussia had a double set of "plenipotentiaries". There was a great deal of argument. Finally, in order to avoid a scandal, it was agreed that Prussia should send no representatives at all, either old or new. Another base surrender by Braun ! He ignominiously avoids all conflict and turns away from every opportunity to represent his case seriously. Papen can afford the luxury of a compromise : he is in possession of power. But Braun ! After the shameless failure of July 20 ?

The only other matter worth mention was the expected row between the Reich and the South German States. Stage thunder, nothing more.

To-day I had a distinguished visitor—Captain Roehm, the so-called "Chief of Staff of the Storm Troopers and Defence Corps". A painful figure ! A few days ago he was the chief participant in a scandalous law case in Munich. A political journalist



had published his disgraceful correspondence (Roehm is a hundred per cent homosexual of the most disgusting type) months before, and, driven by necessity, the "Chief of Staff" had thereupon responded by laying a charge against him and asserting that the letters were forgeries. His opponent took up the charge and offered to prove his case before the court. For a long time Roehm did his best to postpone the case; but at last the day came. The proceedings were fixed to begin at 9.30. At 9.25 Herr Roehm withdrew his charge and declared himself ready to pay the costs.

The letters are genuine and Herr Roehm, Hitler's right-hand man and better half, is one of the most notorious perverts walking about on this earth.

And that was the creature I had to receive to-day!

I asked him what he wanted. He wanted us, he said, to put barracks, manœuvring grounds and arms at the disposition of the Storm Troops, so that they might be properly trained. The numbers that he mentioned were fantastic: round about 180,000 men. He promised to be in a position within four months to hold the frontiers against Poland and Czechoslovakia in the case of a war involving two fronts breaking out, so that the Reichswehr could throw its whole strength against the west. The idea isn't bad. If it is possible we shall carry it through, even though I can't abide these Brown Shirt rascals and don't trust them further than I can see them. But as a cushion behind one's back? Why not?

Generally speaking, Herr Roehm is very confident of victory. He counts on a great triumph for

the National Socialists on 31st July. Comradely feeling in the Hitler camp, however, doesn't seem to be very cordial.

*27th July, 1932.*

To-day Schleicher outlined his programme over the radio to all German stations. I have been advising him to do so for weeks, while Papen, for very understandable grounds, has been trying to put obstacles in the way. Then came Nadolny's fine fighting speech at Geneva, and with that Schleicher's opportunity.

His remarks on the question of a military dictatorship were particularly good, and I really think effective. We have discussed this point for a long time. Herr Hitler will, of course, apply to himself the "popular movement" which Schleicher regards as essential; but quite different people were meant. Above all, the Christian trade unions. Schleicher's rejection of the so-called defence organizations was an excellent move, particularly in view of foreign opinion.

The digressions on the international situation would have been better left out. But Bülow,<sup>1</sup> that blind worshipper of every form of power, to whom the speech had first to be submitted by common agreement, insisted on them.

The reorganization of the Reichswehr into a people's army will probably receive also the support of the Centre parties. The Social Democrats decline to support it; my friend thinks that we'll only be

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<sup>1</sup> Bernhard von Bülow, nephew of the former Chancellor and Ambassador, the late Prince von Bülow, appointed Permanent Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1929.

able to put through our idea of a voluntary militia by disbanding the professional Army. For him, too, the existence of both systems side by side seems unworkable. I don't agree with him on this point.

*28th July, 1932.*

The election fight is costing much bloodshed. The Nazis seem actually possessed, and shoot down everybody who crosses their path. Hindenburg says nothing. The fact that the Left Wing elected him, that in those days the Hitler crowd stabbed and shot down the "Hindenburg soldiers", apparently leaves him unmoved. A peculiar conception of his duty ! But he was just the same as a young lieutenant. In that respect he has remained "true" to himself.

According to universal report, Hitler intends to concentrate all the Storm Troops out of the east and north-east in Berlin on the thirty-first. A *coup* ? In any case we have given the alarm to be in readiness and concentrated six regiments of infantry and a sprinkling of cavalry here. If he wants a little fun, he can have it whenever he likes !

The Social Democrats are taking all the precautions they can think of to maintain their position. One could wish that their poor supporters had a better cause. If Braun and Severing had not capitulated but had made Papen fling them into prison, then perhaps ! But as it is ?

The Communists are very active. The "anti-Fascist campaign" is flourishing, grows and gains ground, and has even infected the Reichswehr.

I have heard (and seen!) Goebbels giving an election speech. I believe there is nothing that the fellow can't twist to mean its opposite. Physically a dwarf, intellectually a giant. But a giant only in the art of pulling down, of destruction. A Mephistopheles!

Such cripples should not be given power, otherwise they plunge the whole world into ruin simply to appease their accursed and suppressed complexes. They hate, and must hate, all that is sound and natural, simply because it has been denied them by fate. Herr Goebbels is a model example of this variety of man.

*29th July, 1932.*

In the evening at the Herren Club. Nothing of consequence. I spoke with Schacht<sup>1</sup> for a long time. He considers the mark bankrupt and beyond salvation. The only question was how long the fact could be kept secret. When I asked him whether he was going to be President of the Reichs Bank again, he lifted both hands in horror.

*30th July, 1932.*

Everybody is waiting feverishly for the polling day. The Junkers are up and doing; they seem to feel very sure of themselves. And the Nazis, too, are

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, President of the Reichsbank 1923-1930 and again in 1933. He represented Germany at the Young Committee of 1929 and also at the Hague Conference of 1929-1930. He resigned because of the Amendments made to the Young Plan by the second Hague Conference. He returned to the Bank after the Nazi Revolution of January 1933.

making themselves very much felt. They have taken the concentration of our troops very badly. Everything is in the melting pot. And the Old Gentleman is taking his ease at Neudeck and playing the country squire. Truly a shining example of Prussian "sense of duty" !

*31st July, 1932.*

The election fight is over. But the Herren Club majority (Right parties plus Nazis) has not materialized. That is the positive result of the day's poll, which otherwise looks disastrous enough.

The moderate parties have gone to pot, including the Centre Party itself. The Hitlerites have won over seven million votes since 1930, and the Socialists lost 600,000. The Communists have gained round about a million votes !

Papen has nothing and nobody behind him if the National Socialists don't come over to his side. True, he will have the support of the Agrarians and the big industrials who, as the result of the tariff policy pursued by us for fifty years, find themselves in the same box for good or evil. And the Army ? The Army has deserted Herr von Papen, from this very day.

The Reichstag is unworkable, unless all the parties right of the Social Democrats should agree to unite. But that is highly improbable, if not impossible. Nothing much can be done in the long run with such heterogeneous elements.

A Presidential Papen Government ? That would



ERNST ROEHM  
Chief of Staff for Hitler's Storm Troops. Minister in Hitler's Cabinet.



me n a Government appointed from above, pursuing a Neudeck country-squire policy and with no responsibility to the people. That seems to be the idea. The result, of course, would be that all the subterranean channels would be given a free course. In the "national" interest, of course !

I feel ready to vomit when I think of this "future" for Germany.





## PART TWO

*From 31st July, 1932, to the  
Fall of Chancellor von Papen*



*1st August, 1932.*

Things have turned out just as might have been expected. "Technically" we have lost the battle with flying colours. If I am right in my calculations, the Government has hardly five per cent of the electorate behind it. I fancy that never after an election has any Cabinet been left so forlorn and unsupported.

And yet we have triumphed ! Parliamentaryism has landed at last in the impasse it has been asking for ; there is no majority in the Reichstag capable of forming a Government.

Certainly the Nazis and the Communists together compose a majority ; but they can't make any use of it. And as for a possible coalition of Hitlerites and Clericals, we shall be quite able to prevent that !

Consequently Germany must be ruled without a majority behind the back of the Reichstag. That is the net result of the election ; a famous victory for us.

The various parties, however, are quite pleased with themselves. That's priceless, and that's why I am so fond of democracy ! Herr Hitler is rapturous over his 230 deputies, and Herr Wels is rubbing his hands because he has not lost still more seats. But in effect, the Communists are the real victors ; they have won three-quarters of a million new voters and muster now ninety seats. Some food for thought there, for behind each of these ninety men stand, not merely 60,000 sheep-like voters as in the other

parties, but active fighters who are resolute and prepared for battle. That aspect of his "victory" cannot be much of a comfort to Papen. Nor to his friends, the large industrialists and landowners who pull the strings.

The country itself seems to be in a wild state. During last night alone the Nazis accounted for ten dead and eighty-three wounded ! The "Third Empire" is beginning well !

Evening at the Herren Club. Papen is delighted. He had "of course foreseen everything" ; how could it have been otherwise with the omniscient one ? Anyhow, he has been telling the world, whether they want to hear it or not, that he and his Cabinet will remain in power in spite of the election result. "The Reich must not be sacrificed to the whims of the misguided mob !"

Well, everybody knows that he dissolved the Reichstag because its composition no longer represented "the will of the people". And now ? Herr Papen is prepared to honour "the will of the people" only in so far as it accords with the will of the Herren Club and the Government. For only the people can err ; the Government never makes a mistake. Still less the Herren Club !

Papen will try, he says, to get the Nazis and the Centre to collaborate with him. Under his own wing, naturally. The Cabinet will remain "authoritative", and Hitler will not become Chancellor. He could achieve that only through a "parliamentary" Cabinet (and, of course, he could never scrape together a parliamentary majority).

The "glutton", says Papen, must eat humble pie, or else he will find himself out in the cold. The Old Gentleman is resolved to be ruthless.

What particular course Papen will take he does not himself know yet. First of all, he's going for a holiday in the Saar, by aeroplane. I have the impression that the applecart has been hopelessly upset.

Not a word can be got out of Schleicher. He is "brooding".

*2nd August, 1932.*

Herr Hitler has suddenly come to his senses again! But he has had amazing luck ; we were prepared for every eventuality, and would not have been at all ill-pleased to get the chance of a smashing blow at the Brown rabble once and for all.

His intention was to issue an ultimatum demanding the resignation of the Government and the "unconditional surrender of power" to himself within a given time. In how far this project proceeded from his own brain-cells and suppressed complexes, in how far he himself was forced into it by his followers, I do not know. But in any case his emissaries were all assembled here, Goering, Roehm the indispensable, and Herr Heines.<sup>1</sup> At the last moment the execution of the plan was countermanded. They also gave up the idea of concentrating their Storm Troops. This

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<sup>1</sup> Edmund Heines. After the War a member of the "Black Reichswehr", a secret political organization in whose activities Heines was condemned to death for "Feme-murder". After his reprieve he joined the Nazi Party and became a Reichstag deputy and Storm Troop leader in Upper Silesia. After the Nazi Revolution he was appointed Police-President of Dierlow. He was shot on June 30, 1934.

complaisance is almost to be regretted ; we might have had a grand clearing-up, now long overdue !

The Reichstag is to be summoned at the end of this month. Meanwhile, Papen and Schleicher are putting out feelers to discover whether, and how far, the basis of the Government can be widened. They are willing to work with the Reichstag, but not on a parliamentary basis, only "authoritatively". They are determined, however, to carry on with or without the Reichstag, according to circumstances.

3rd August, 1932.

If only somebody would put a stopper on the fool ! The fellow will bring us all to the gallows yet ! Yesterday, or early to-day, Herr Hitler received the correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*, who, among other questions, put the following to him : "In the event of your coming into power, will you ratify the Lausanne Pact ?" And Herr Hitler answered flatly and roundly : "Never in this life !"

Neurath is raging, and Papen feels that he has been let down. But the Old Gentleman opines that one should not quarrel with Hitler "over such a trifle". That's what is called statesmanship. Hopeless !

Herr Brüning, who has done as much as anybody to discredit democracy, is now suddenly concerned for it. He is zealously labouring to bring about a Black and Brown coalition, with Hitler as Chancellor and himself as Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister. The Nazis do not seem to be disinclined ; but Hugenberg is trying to put a spoke in the wheel. He knows

that his game is lost if parliamentarianism returns. A heart-uplifting dog-fight !

Herr Kube<sup>1</sup> is singing Schleicher's praises *forlissimo* : the General is the only man in the Cabinet with whom he can "associate". The others, Papen above all, are trying to cheat the Nazis out of their heritage. Their heritage being the economic crisis. I suppose that's what he means. For it is on poverty that they flourish ; the poverty of their fellow-men, naturally, not their own. Herr Thyssen has taken care to alleviate that !

The reign of terror in the country grows from day to day. A dozen dead has become a normal occurrence. A bad look-out for humanity in general if ever these Brown villains are let loose upon it !

The Government turns a blind eye to this national pestilence. It is unwilling to prejudice relations with its future spouse. I suppose that can be called policy ! Herr Hitler, of course, sees through the manœuvre and only becomes perkier and more presumptuous than ever.

That's all one gains !

4th August, 1932.

Papen has honoured us with a report as long as my arm about the Saar. Naturally, he sees the position in the rosiest colours, as usual. I don't.

I am seriously worried about the state of things. Our New German policy is literally driving the Saar workers into the French, or, at least, the autonomist

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<sup>1</sup> Wilhelm Kube, deputy and Chairman of the Nazi Party in the Prussian Landtag. Later appointed Provincial President of Brandenburg.



camp. If the men in Paris had only half an eye open they could bring off a second Marne victory in the Saar. With the same catastrophic consequences for us.

The sins of our past under Wilhelm the Second are still being harvested there. At that time the whole Saar was merely of strategical importance ; its industry was systematically suppressed, and as far as possible stifled, in favour of the Ruhr. Exactly the same thing is being done again ! To-day the Saarlanders are being courted ; but what about to-morrow ?

If we are honest we must admit that, economically, we could exist quite well without the Saar, while the province is essential to France, at least as an autonomous country independent of Germany. Yet on military grounds the Saar triangle is indispensable to us, as our front is now and will remain towards the west.

That France will win the plebiscite I consider out of the question, unless Papen should continue in power for a long time, or be replaced by a greater and more outrageous ass. Autonomy seems to me the most probable solution, and the best for the Saarlanders, whose interests are infinitely more closely connected with Paris than with Berlin. For us this result would, of course, be calamitous ; but I'm afraid the people's vote will not be influenced by military considerations. The one hope I can see in this direction is that our friends, the French, will commit one blunder after another and let things take their course. They have no man with sufficient psychological insight to organize this essentially German province. And that is a good thing.

I have often discussed this question with my friend. For whole nights ; he has the whole problem at his fingertips. And does not altogether reject the validity of my military arguments. He considers that a Saar neutral to both sides would be the best solution, but above all, a guarantee of peace. Here I'm of a different opinion ! The best guarantee of peace, even for France, is an invincible German Army. But in order to deploy and, if necessary, launch that Army, we need the Saar. The question must be considered and decided from that point of view alone.

One proposal of Papen's isn't bad : that at the earliest moment we should set up with public money a great financial organization in the Saar to provide business firms with the necessary credits and put an end to unemployment. That, of course, can only be done if the rest of Germany foots the bill. But why should that be out of the question ? After all, the decision is a confoundedly important one, for which our military departments and the funds at their disposal must be and can be interested.

*5th August, 1932.*

This morning with Schleicher in Dresden inspecting the Infantry School. He made a speech to the youngsters which, in explicitness, left nothing to be desired.

Returned by aeroplane to Berlin at midday. A fine state of things here. Papen's Brown Shirt friends are behaving in a manner beneath contempt. They burn and murder without the Government's daring to make short work of them. The police and the

authorities do nothing at all ; "justice" no longer exists in Germany. Everybody is afraid of losing his post, and so prefers to stomach all the Nazis' blood-thirsty proceedings.

Schleicher has demanded the immediate setting up of special summary courts whose sentences will be executed without loss of time. I consider this an absolute necessity, although I fear that these courts, following previous examples, will proceed exclusively against the Communists and let the Brown murderers and incendiaries go scot free.

In the other camp they seem to have grown confoundedly apprehensive. Oskar Hindenburg writes to us that to-day he received a visit from Herr Goebbels, who has vowed to put a stop at once to the Nazi reign of terror. Herr Goebbels of all people ! Considering that this cripple, this dwarf, has himself done his best to fan all the sadism to white heat !

*6th August, 1932.*

Really, there are some fine people among the Brown Shirts. And the finest of the lot is the chief himself !

Herr Hitler has to-day sent us a new plan, through Goering, for which he begs our "absolute discretion". He proposes that the Nazis should try to make Schleicher Chancellor and keep him in power for at least two years. Three National Socialist Ministers should enter the Cabinet ; the selection of these three would be subject to Schleicher's veto. In return, Schleicher would do his utmost to induce Hindenburg, who had "grown impossible", to

retire, and to put Hitler in his place. Schleicher, in addition to the Chancellorship, would retain the Ministry of War; as President, Hitler would renounce (1) his right to supreme command of the armed forces, but the Nazis would have official control of the police administration in the various States.

A plan which in itself is worth consideration—if one did not know beforehand that Hitler would let one down. This certainty, and our own lack of inclination deliberately to invite such a contingency, made it easy for us to assume a rôle of moral indignation and reject the proposal. Herr Goering took himself off again.

Gayl informs us that the Brown Shirts have formed auxiliary police forces of their own in Oldenburg, Brunswick, and Mecklenburg-Schwerin. He has "demanded an explanation". More he does not dare to do before Papen's return.

*7th August, 1932.*

The Nazis are preparing for trouble. They have assembled all their Storm Troop formations round about Berlin. Count Helldorff, whom we summoned here, tried to pass it all off as a harmless matter, and said that it was only a means of keeping a firmer hand on their men and preventing them with certainty from making trouble. Helldorff could not produce any plausible explanation, however, of the presence of Silesian divisions under the command of Heines.

Schleicher warned him in the most urgent terms against any illegalities, and "promised" him that the

Reichswehr would proceed against the Nazis with the utmost ruthlessness if even the slightest irregularity took place.

Herr Hitler is once more in Berlin. He is resolved to "seize power" at all costs. This evening he is to meet Schleicher ; I am keen to know what will be the outcome. At any rate, it must be clear to the Government that they have lost much of their authority by this slackness.

*8th August, 1932.*

Hitler is a broken man ! He complained almost despairingly to Schleicher about his own people, whose "greed" would yet be the ruin of him. Goebbels was the worst ; he had already forced him to stand for the Presidency at the election, although he, Hitler, had explicitly refused. And now, too, Goebbels was against any understanding with Schleicher and any mere participation in the Government.

Schleicher was not absolutely against the idea of working along with Hitler. But in no circumstances would he consent to Hitler's becoming the Chancellor of an "authoritative" Cabinet ; he justified his refusal by the fact that Hitler was first and foremost the chief of his party and would remain so. Hitler saw the force of this objection and proposed that he should resign the leadership of his party, so as to become Chancellor in spite of all.

The things people are prepared to do out of pure vanity ! Schleicher retorted that he, Hitler, had no claim to be regarded as an equal partner in negotiations except in his capacity as chief of the

Nazis. If he had not a party behind him, then he did not stand for enough in himself to have any chance of becoming Chancellor. But, as chief of his party, he could become Vice-Chancellor; Schleicher was prepared to vouch for that.

Hitler interrupted him with the remark that, personally speaking, he had no objection; but Papen and Gayl must be cleared out of the Cabinet. He could not consort with that pair. Schleicher would be Chancellor and War Minister; he, Hitler, Vice-Chancellor; Brüning, Foreign Minister; Strasser, Minister of Labour. But first he must consult with his friends; he could not definitely pledge himself.

That is how things stand at the moment. At any rate, Schleicher will strive to find a place in the Government for the Nazis, so as to break their villainous opposition and reassure the Old Gentleman. He doubts, however, whether Hindenburg will be content to sacrifice his favourite, Papen.

The whole will, of course, mean, if it should come to pass, nothing more than a modern form of military dictatorship, whose severity will be somewhat modified by the "popular basis" represented by the Brown Shirts. Only in appearance, of course; not in reality.

*9th August, 1932.*

The terroristic acts of the Brown Shirts are assuming alarming proportions. As a consequence, the Government has to-day issued an extremely severe emergency decree, appointed special courts, and threatened the death penalty. But, naturally,

the Ministers have not had the courage to say quite openly that the brutalities of the Nazis have forced them into these measures ; they behave as if the wicked Communists were responsible for them. I am eager to see what will be the outcome. I scarcely imagine that the Hitlerites will be very greatly intimidated by this step. For even should one of those rascals be sentenced to death, he is sure to be pardoned again. They know that. And besides, our "German" judges are too thoroughly frightened and scared of the Terror, which does not stop short of attacking even them.

The negotiations between Schleicher and Hitler have fizzled out. The "Leader" has been whistled to heel by his advisers. He cannot afford to content himself with the post of Vice-Chancellor ; he must demand "all". Goering and Goebbels are the chief whetters of his resolution.

*10th August, 1932.*

If this last scandal isn't bad enough, then I cannot see what in Heaven's name has still got to happen to waken up the dreamers in the Government and the Presidential palace.

Last night, immediately after the coming into force of the special tribunals, five of Herr Heines' authorized Storm Troopers forced their way into a workman's house in Potempa and shot the man down (with thirty-five revolver shots !) before the eyes of his wife and children. After committing this deed they went and got drunk. And the police did not even think of troubling about the murderers ; only when



DR. JOSEF GOEBBELS  
Minister of Propaganda in Hitler's Cabinet.





they received a severe dressing-down from us did they move !<sup>1</sup>

Schleicher is furious. He intends to demand of Hindenburg an immediate proclamation of martial law against the Nazis. Papen advised him to go slow ; one couldn't hold the Party responsible for the acts of "individuals". Schleicher demanded that the Old Gentleman himself should decide.

Hindenburg, who has just returned from Neudeck for the celebrations of the so-called Constitution, received the Chancellor and Schleicher in a furious temper. He demanded that the murderers of Potempa should be drastically proceeded against. The decree proclaiming martial law he rejected "for the time being".

Papen brought up the question of expanding the basis of the Government, and explained Hitler's wishes. The Old Gentleman agreed that the National Socialists should be co-opted as far as possible ; but on no account must Hitler be made Chancellor. "The man isn't even capable of being Postmaster-General !" If no bargain could be struck, then the battle must just be fought to a finish. "I won't allow myself to be browbeaten ! Tell Herr Hitler that !"

Papen suggested that Hindenburg should receive the Leader of the National Socialists to see if the matter could not be cleared up. Hindenburg violently refused. "I can't and I won't see the fellow now !" Schleicher tried to persuade the Old Gentleman that

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<sup>1</sup> The murderers were arrested, tried and condemned to death, but their sentences were commuted at the insistence of Hitler, who claimed them as his "blood-brothers". They were released soon after the Nazi Revolution.

it would have a good effect on foreign opinion if he were to have a talk with Hitler at the present stage. Finally Hindenburg gave in ; he was ready to receive Hitler. He would also leave the Chancellor to make the arrangements, and he insisted that the Press should not be told about it beforehand (this at Meissner's instigation).

*11th August, 1932.*

Gayl made the oration on the Constitution in the Reichstag to-day. That is to say, he left not a single shred of the Constitution intact when he had finished. I must frankly say that the whole business was extraordinarily tactless. And elementary besides ! Gayl seems to think that everything will be better, that unemployment will vanish and business flourish and prosper if only Wilhelm were to return. "Because we have been unfaithful to our King, God has withdrawn his favour from us !" An argument, if you like ! Gayl seems to be of the opinion that the whole German people fled to Holland in November 1918, and only the "Kaiser" remained "faithful" !

Meanwhile, Herr Hitler is struggling desperately to acquire power. He *will* be Chancellor. In a Presidential Cabinet, naturally. Schleicher is to retain the Ministry for War, and also be Vice-Chancellor, Strasser to be Minister for Home Affairs, and also Prussian Commissioner, Papen to be Foreign Minister. He will "renounce" Brüning. We are considering whether we should pass on this rubbish to Hindenburg or not.

*12th August, 1932.*

Only yesterday Hitler was against the Blacks, but to-day he is already trying to form a coalition with them! Hugenberg, who would lose everything by an agreement between the Nazis and the Centre, is setting all his levers in motion to thwart the attempt. The position is quite obscure. Schleicher is at the moment discussing with Papen and Oskar Hindenburg whether they should bring Herr Hitler before the President to-morrow.

A typical result of Social Democratic private politics. A quite insignificant Ministerial Councillor, Scholz by name, has been occupied till now in the Ministry for Home Affairs, having been set there by Severing, of blessed memory. To-day he was appointed Commissioner for German broadcasting, so as to carry on public propaganda for the Government (and against Severing, of course).

*13th August, 1932.*

A heart-uplifting day!

Herr Hitler has been given the order of the boot as never before! But I shall begin at the beginning.

Early this morning he paid us a visit. He was politeness itself and tried to make clear to General Schleicher how much he, Hitler, was at the beck and call of his followers. If some positive decision were not now finally achieved, then he did not know how long he would be able to control his Storm Troopers. Schleicher confined himself to repeating his former offer—Hitler as Vice-Chancellor, Strasser as Prussian

Commissioner. Hitler replied that that was not enough ; he had "two hundred and thirty deputies in the Reichstag after all". Schleicher retorted very dryly : "And we can dissolve the Reichstag and dissolve it again and again !"

Finally, Hitler begged the General to arrange an interview with the Chancellor for him, which Schleicher willingly did. While Hitler was on his way we telephoned to Papen and arranged that the meeting between Hitler and Hindenburg should take place that day.

What Hitler discussed with Papen I don't know ; Papen has said nothing about it. And infinitely more important was Hitler's reception by the Old Gentleman, in which our side was represented by Papen and Schleicher. The whole business lasted hardly ten minutes. And, much to Hitler's chagrin, he had to stand during the whole interview.

It began by Hindenburg asking Hitler, without any preamble, whether he and the other members of his party were prepared to enter Papen's Cabinet. Hitler replied in the negative, and put forward the demand that he should be made Chancellor "with the same powers as Mussolini was given after his victorious march to Rome". Hindenburg cut him short very brusquely, and with an unmistakably contemptuous gesture ; he could not be responsible to his conscience for delivering the power of the State to the National Socialists. Their record of murders and butcheries up to date showed with terrifying clearness how Hitler would exploit the power of the State.

Hitler tried to reassure the Old Gentleman. "A few thousand deaths mean nothing in an historical process involving such far-reaching consequences." Hindenburg once more interrupted him. He regretted that Hitler was not disposed to keep the solemn promise given to him, the President, before the election ; Hitler had vowed then that he would support the Papen Government no matter what the result of the poll might be, on the sole condition that the Marxian Government in Prussia should go and the measures prohibiting the Storm Troops be repealed. He, Hindenburg, had kept his side of the bargain, and must now assume that Hitler had either deceived him or else was too weak to fulfil his obligations.

Under this painful attack Hitler became silent. Then Hindenburg required to know what Hitler intended to do now, since the negotiations had fallen through. Hitler, who apparently had still been counting on gaining over the President, retorted in a voice hoarse with rage : "Opposition will be my policy ! Opposition to the last ditch !"

That was too much for the Old Gentleman. He raised his stick threateningly against Hitler, and ordered him in an imperious tone to conduct his opposition fairly and honourably, or else he would be made to feel the consequences. Then Hindenburg turned away abruptly and left the room, along with Papen and Schleicher. Without even saying good-bye to Herr Hitler !

Thereupon the Old Gentleman said curtly to Papen and the War Minister : "The matter is settled and settled for good !" Then he proceeded to the

train and set out for Neudeck—where new intrigues will, of course, begin.

This ejection of the megalomaniac was very fine. But the whole business spells also the complete failure of the Papen-Schleicher policy. The two of them had set everything on the one card : to initiate Hitler and the Nazis into responsibility. Hence their desperate subterfuges !

All that has been achieved now could have been achieved long ago, and, above all, far more cheaply, without giving umbrage to the whole world !

All is not yet lost, of course, if they only get down to things, proclaim (and enforce) martial law, proceed against the Brown Shirt murderers, dissolve the Storm Troops, if need be arrest Hitler and bring him before the special tribunal. That is necessary—and possible. Anything else is toying with the problem.

In the evening I was once more at the Herren Club. Meissner described Hitler's début in the Palace. He almost burst with laughter, "it was so funny !"

The visit had a long story leading up to it. Without Oskar Hindenburg it would never have taken place. The Old Gentleman's aversion to the "Austrian", the "revolutionist from the gutter", the "corporal", was almost insurmountable.

What about the reception itself ? Meissner shuddered with horror. Well then, Hindenburg is waiting. Hitler enters, makes an abortive attempt at a profound bow, and fumbles with his hand behind his back to shut the door, which, of course, has already closed behind him. Then, noticing his lapse, he grows red in the face and makes with uncertain steps towards

the Old Gentleman, who is standing in the middle of the room. But at the very start he stumbles over the carpet, and, to judge from the furious glare he gives it, he is in urgent danger of flinging himself upon it and chastising it physically. Then he laboriously continues his way and finds himself at last, at long last, before Hindenburg. Papen does the honours.

Then, said Meissner, came something supremely comical. Hardly had Hitler straightened himself from his devout reverence when he prepared to launch one of his great public speeches. But Hindenburg made a sweep with his arm and Hitler collapsed in terrified silence. Into this silence Hindenburg broke in a harsh voice : "I have summoned you, Herr Hitler, in order to hear from you whether you are prepared to enter the Cabinet of Herr von Papen as Vice-Chancellor. Naturally, in that case, your party would be in duty bound to support and assist the Government to the full extent of its power."

Hitler was taken aback, and could find no answer. Then Papen said, to make it easier for him : "Of course, the composition of the Cabinet would be somewhat modified and your party asked to collaborate by being liberally represented in it." And Hindenburg went on very rudely : "Yes, but the appointment of the Foreign Minister and the Minister for War shall remain exclusively my concern. Nothing will change that !"

Another silence. Then at last Hitler spoke : "But, your Excellency, we must surely come to some agreement about the programme of this Government first !" Hindenburg retorted : "The Government's



programme ? It is there. It is the programme of Herr Chancellor von Papen." Hitler once more fell into an embarrassed silence. Then he ventured another question. "And what, your Excellency, is to be done about Prussia ?" Hindenburg, now visibly impatient, replied : "I can't understand what you mean by such a stupid question ! My Commissioner for Prussia is, and will remain, Herr von Papen. But please give me an answer to my first question, because of which I asked you to come here. This matter is not one that can be postponed."

Then Hitler demanded "full powers", *à la* Mussolini, and the Old Gentleman elegantly flung him out.

We bombarded Meissner with questions, and wanted to hear still more. But he maintained that he had described everything exactly and fully. He was of the opinion that Hitler would sing small after all that.

Meissner and Oskar Hindenburg seemed enormously pleased with "their work". I have the feeling that this elation is very much out of keeping ; one cannot carry on politics in *that* way.

But all the same, I don't begrudge Hitler this fiasco !

One more thing : Herr Hitler has departed to nurse his wrath in the Bavarian mountains. He has given his Storm Troops leave "until further notice".

*16th August, 1932.*

I have been for two days in Frankfort-on-the-Oder, preparing for the great autumn manœuvres. Nothing important has happened in the interval.

Hindenburg has written a letter to the central Jewish organization in which he speaks out trenchantly against anti-Semitism. He declares that he will do everything he can to prevent any attack or even any slight on the Jews.

Oberfohren<sup>1</sup> has announced that he is coming to see us to-morrow.

*17th August, 1932.*

We have intercepted a Storm Troop despatch, ordering all divisions to assemble in and around Berlin on the day that the Reichstag opens. All to the good! When the whole of them are gathered together one can blot them out all the more quickly. It must come to that some time or other! In any case, we have taken the necessary precautions and they will be under reliable surveillance.

*20th August, 1932.*

Löbe<sup>2</sup> has summoned the Reichstag for 30th August. The decisive move will come in the beginning of September.

Herr Hitler has grown small and pitiable. He writes to Schleicher saying "how hard" things are with him; his men are growing impatient, and want, after waiting so long, "to achieve something". By

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ernst Oberfohren, Deputy and Chairman of the Nationalist Party in the Reichstag. "Committed suicide" in April 1933.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Löbe, Social Democratic Deputy and President of the Reichstag 1919-1932. Arrested and placed in a concentration camp after the Nazi Revolution of January 1933.

all appearances he wants to treat with us again before the Reichstag meets. We can wait.

If the Reichstag is stupid and causes us difficulties, then we shall dissolve it. Hindenburg has already signed the order ; only the date requires to be added. And the statement of the ostensible grounds.

The Social Democratic parliamentary deputies have to-day decided on a brilliant "Socialist programme". The only fault in it is that it comes far too late. When these gentlemen were in power they wanted to hear precious little about practical Socialism. But now that they're in opposition ! And apart from that, is the proposed means calculated to lead to success ? Via the Reichstag, the Reichs Council and the President ?

I'm convinced of the contrary. In any case, the scheme will be wrecked on the opposition of the President. Especially as it deals with the expropriation of the large land-proprietors. That will make Hindenburg remember that he is only President incidentally, and that his chief vocation is to be the squire of Neudeck. The Socialists could, of course, swing the country with them by a great popular decision. Then they could drive a wedge into the Nazis, win over the Communists, and recover with one blow their squandered authority.

But will they summon up the courage to face such consequences ? I can hardly believe it. They have never yet really got down to things. Only pottered with them. In spite of the best human material behind them ; in spite of their wealth of political ideas !

21st August, 1932.

The Prussian Landtag is also going to meet on 30th August, simultaneously with the Reichstag. That may turn out to be a fine farce !

Otherwise, nothing of consequence.

22nd August, 1932.

The murderers of Potempa have been sentenced to death. A harsh, but a just punishment. I fancy it will have a deterrent effect, and only hope that the Government will have the courage to have the rascals shot or beheaded. They made a wretched show before the judge—cowardly and pitiable. Communists would have comported themselves differently from these Brown swaggerers !

Herr Hitler has become a "revolutionist". He has sent the men a telegram : *Your honour is my honour !* He must know what his own "honour" is like.

23rd August, 1932.

The Cabinet is at its wits' end over the death sentence on the murderers of Potempa. They are afraid to execute the sentence, but they are no less afraid to pardon the murderers. A "strong" policy—that is what Herr von Papen says he stands for !

Otherwise nothing worth relating. A general holiday spirit.

24th August, 1932.

The Nazis have launched a formal declaration of war against us. This has been the only diversion to-day.

25th August, 1932.

Goering and Stoehr<sup>1</sup> appeared to-day to treat with Schleicher in the name of the so-called "Leader" regarding the programme of the Reichstag session. Apparently they wish to have nothing more to do with Papen. The interview was brief and painless.

In the evening I listened to a brilliant address by Luther<sup>2</sup> on the "Folly of Autarchy". It was refreshing to hear him demolishing the National Socialist programme. Herr Hitler was not present !

26th August, 1932.

We have banned Goebbels's paper, the *Angriff*. I congratulate the Government for having at last roused itself. It was high time too, if it didn't wish to lose the last remnant of authority.

Goering was with me for a short time to-day. Important tidings : Hitler's nerves have "completely broken down" (as if Hitler's "nerves" had ever been in proper order !). He has been packed away to a sanatorium in Thuringia ; Strasser is taking his place.

Then Goering wished to know whether Schleicher was prepared to join a Black and Brown Cabinet. So that business is still on the carpet ! Schleicher declined with thanks.

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<sup>1</sup> A Nazi Deputy in the Reichstag.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Hans Luther, Burgomaster of Essen until 1925, when he became Chancellor and, with Dr. Stresemann, negotiated the Locarno Agreement. On the resignation of Dr. Schacht he became President of the Reichsbank, and retained that position until Hitler appointed him Ambassador to the United States in 1933.

*29th August, 1932.*

I have been for two days on the western frontier. An aeroplane is an excellent invention !

Papen, Schleicher, and Gayl are still at Neudeck with the Old Gentleman. They are expected back to-morrow morning. I am eager to see what they have hatched out to deal with the Reichstag question.

Hitler appeared yesterday in Berlin. That sanatorium must have got rid of him very quickly ! He has once again, with wearisome iteration, made his men renew their oath of allegiance to him. To-morrow he wishes to speak with Schleicher.

To-day he is setting everything in motion to establish a Black and Brown alliance in Prussia. Papen has laid counter-mines, and, by all appearances, called in the help of the Vatican, so that Brüning and the Centre may be called to heel.

To-morrow the Reichstag meets. It won't provide any great surprises. They're all much too afraid !

*30th August, 1932.*

Herr Goering has brought it off ! He has been made President of the Reichstag. It was not a walk-over, true, but he has managed it all the same.

In his joy he immediately telegraphed to Hindenburg begging for an audience, so as to make his bow in his new dignity. The Old Gentleman telegraphed just as promptly ; there would be ample time and opportunity "for that formality" when he returned to Berlin.

Otherwise, the sitting went off entirely according

to programme. The speech of Clara Zetkin,<sup>1</sup> the day's president by virtue of seniority, made a great impression. There was a mind behind it, and a heart too.

The talk between Schleicher and Hitler might as well have never taken place. Banalities, nothing more.

*31st August, 1932.*

The Government has been granted full powers by Hindenburg. How little the Old Gentleman gives for parliament and his "solemn" vow to preserve the Constitution may be seen from the fact that he has signed the order dissolving the Reichstag without even knowing of any grounds for it. He has declared, in all tranquillity, that the Reichstag may go on, but only if it is submissive. "Otherwise it will be dissolved." If our foreign neighbours should ever see through this rotten fraud, then our last shred of credit is done for ; how can we ask others to believe us when our highest dignitaries act so disgracefully ?

The Prussian Landtag has launched an offensive against the Government and the Reichs Commissioner, Bracht. It was pitiable to see the Social Democratic Ministers, with Herr Braun at their head, once more choosing the better part of valour and cravenly absenting themselves. Herr Hirtsiefer had the dubious honour of acting as deputy for the deserters.

*It seems that Schleicher's article in the Heimat-*

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<sup>1</sup> Clara Zetkin, a veteran Communist leader, over 80 years old, elected *in absentia* as a Reichstag Deputy, travelled from Moscow to fill the office of provisional President of the Reichstag and to make the inaugural address. Died in 1933.

*Dienst*<sup>1</sup> on his policy for the defence force has not been well received. It must be admitted that he makes the mistake of issuing statements for foreign consumption in the same form and the same tone as if he were addressing German "subjects". I have warned him repeatedly ; but he refuses to believe that people beyond the frontiers are any less ready than our own to bow their heads humbly when a General speaks.

The things he foreshadowed regarding the future development of the State were very good, however. We must begin again where we left off after Frederick the Great. I agree with him that Germany can only exist as a modern military state. The only art we require is that of concealing its character in some plausible way, so that the other countries may not take premature action.

*1st September, 1932.*

Our aggressive attitude in the matter of equality of armaments has made a bad impression. The moment for it, too, was abominably ill-chosen. When, in one's own country, one plays ducks and drakes with the Constitution, one's most solemn vows naturally lose appreciably in market value.

But Papen insisted upon it. He fancies that by this spirited move he will secure himself a better position in the Reichstag. There's no hope for him.

Herr Goebbels threatens in his paper to impeach the President for violating the Constitution. That might turn out to be a serious, a very serious, matter,

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<sup>1</sup> The fortnightly journal of the Reich Central Department for Home Service



if there were still honourable judges in Germany. But that is not the case—and Herr Hindenburg is in luck !

Schleicher is going away to-day for a few days' leave.

*2nd September, 1932.*

The murderers of Potempa have been pardoned. As was to be expected. The axiom, "Equal rights for all", applies, naturally, only to Papen's friends. Woe to them if they had been Communists ; they would have been executed with alacrity. The country is almost being driven to civil war. For that the masses will put up with this indefinitely, is out of the question.

Düsterberg<sup>1</sup> to-day gave a very clever interview to the Press on the peculiar function of the "Steel Helmets". This organization cannot receive too much support from us. Magnificent fighting material, splendid discipline. Düsterberg has told me that our training course has had excellent results. All things considered, round about 70,000 men in the "Steel Helmets" are now fit for active service.

*3rd September, 1932.*

The Steel Helmets' great demonstration in the Sport Palace must have passed off famously. Papen, Schleicher, Neurath, the former Crown Prince, and others were present. Unfortunately I could not go ; I was with Hammerstein in Mecklenburg at the manœuvres.

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<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel von Düsterberg, an officer of the Regular Army and a member of the Armistice Commission at Spa. Became Second Leader of the Stahlhelm and Nationalist candidate for the Presidency in the first ballot of April 1932. Expelled from the Stahlhelm as a Jew in 1933.



KARL SEVERING  
Formerly Prussian Minister of the Interior.



The Nazis have been up to a new piece of impudence. While Papen and Schleicher were at Neudeck with the Old Gentleman, suddenly the telephone gave out ; it has been discovered since that the Nazis cut the wire. The President has requested that the affair should be hushed up. These Brown brutes are allowed to do whatever they like !

*4th September, 1932.*

The Steel Helmets' parade in the Tempelhofer Feld<sup>1</sup> was an imposing spectacle. One could do something with these troops. In comparison, the Nazis are so much dirt.

Schleicher did not take part. He was afraid that it might be seized upon abroad. As it is, he can say that he knows nothing.

In high politics nothing much is happening. The Nazis seem to have come to an agreement with the Centre. Hindenburg declares, however, that he will not hand over governmental power even to a parliamentary majority. "The decision already made holds good." A dangerous dictatorship, dangerous because one never can tell who will be whispering in the Old Gentleman's ear to-morrow. In any case, not even Wilhelm the Second himself ever had such power !

To-morrow, early, I am leaving by aeroplane for the manœuvres in East Prussia.

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly the great military parade ground of Berlin, now the airport.

*7th September, 1932.*

A soldier's life for me ; it's a splendid invention ! After the stuffy weeks in Berlin these few days have been an absolute pleasure.

The condition of the East Prussian regiments is splendid. General von Blomberg has done his work well. The rumour of the threatened Polish invasion has caught fire so thoroughly that almost the whole population played at war along with us.

Looked at properly, and if one compares our little Reichswehr with other contingents, the German Army really consists exclusively of officers, each one of them capable of General Staff work, and of highly qualified N.C.O.'s. Rank-and-file, in the literal sense, we have none ; the last soldier has been trained as an independent leader. An ideal force, which could easily be multiplied by ten at a day's notice.

The "Defence Corps" made a good impression upon me. These fellows still need a little polishing up, rifle practice, etc. But they could be used quite well as they are.

Schleicher's speech at Elbing, in which he publicly announces the expansion of the Reichswehr, seems highly undiplomatic to me. He may be perfectly in the right, but one should not say so until one is adequately prepared for all eventualities. And that is not yet quite the case. So one should be silent !

*8th September, 1932.*

Our military State is making progress. Captain von Carlowitz has been made head of the Press

Bureau of the Prussian Government. Now we have control of both Press bureaux, that of the Reich and that of Prussia. Excellent!

Hindenburg has returned from Neudeck to-day. Papen and Schleicher have informed him of the present state of things. The Old Gentleman absolutely refuses to accept a Government of the Black and Brown majority, which, so Joos and Goering have announced to us to-day, has been brought off. There must be no alteration of the present Government. If the Reichstag isn't satisfied, then it will be dissolved. In that case the new election will take place on 6th November.

*9th September, 1932.*

The President of the Reichstag called on Hindenburg to make his bow. After the formalities were over, Goering announced to the Old Gentleman that there was a working majority of Nazis and Centre Party delegates in the Reichstag capable of forming a Government. Herr Graef<sup>1</sup> interrupted furiously that the bureau of the Reichstag had no powers to carry on political negotiations with the President concerning the formation of Governments. Hindenburg supported this objection, but requested Herr Goering, nevertheless, to continue. When Goering had finished, without naming names, however, Hindenburg said that he had listened "with interest". He reserved his decision.

No declaration of any kind has ensued. But it

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<sup>1</sup> German National and a Vice-President of the Reichstag.

looks as if there will be no change. Hindenburg is more obstinate than ever. The Neudeck air must have done him good, and among the squirearchy everybody seems to be perfectly satisfied with Papen's policy.

*10th September, 1932.*

Herr Hitler has to-day once more put out feelers : would Schleicher be prepared to act as Chancellor in a Black and Brown Cabinet ? Schleicher declined with thanks, after receiving a declaration from Hindenburg that he would stick to Papen as Chancellor, no matter what happened. But, so as to give an appearance of removing the sting from his harsh refusal, the Reichs President, for the sake of form, will receive on 13th September the official delegates of the Nazis, the Centre, and the Bavarian People's Party.

We have scored a brilliant victory over Papen and Bracht : a Reichswehr officer is to be appointed as Chief of Police by the Prussian Government. With that, this matter, too, will be put on a proper footing. For a whole year it has rankled in my mind that the excellent Prussian police are not organized on a military basis, and, above all, not sufficiently trained. That will be changed now. Whom we shall detail to the job I don't know yet. In any case, it won't be the worst man we can find ; 70,000 to 80,000 armed police are not a trifling matter.

*11th September, 1932.*

To-day is the anniversary of the ill-fated battle of the Marne. A mournful memory! And I am still of the opinion that that fiasco could have been avoided.

*12th September, 1932.*

The Reichstag has been dissolved! A blatant violation of the Constitution! But we are strong enough, it seems, to afford ourselves the pleasure. Even to repeat the dose if our friends, the parliamentarians, wish it!

The affair began quite harmlessly. There was only one motion in the order of the day—a statement by the Government. Before business began, however, the Communist, Torgler, moved that the House should divide at once on his motion of no confidence in the Government. As this proposal amounted to an alteration of the programme already decided upon for the day, it could only go through if no opposition was raised to it. Goering, the President, put the question to the assembly, and to the general astonishment nobody rose to take exception, not even Hugenberg's henchmen. Accordingly, the Communists' motion of no confidence became the first item of the day's programme.

This put the Nazis in a very painful position; they had come hoping to gain time and to hear what Papen had to say. In his agitation, Herr Frick<sup>1</sup> got

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Wilhelm Frick, a Nazi Deputy, formerly Minister of Interior in Thuringia and the first Nazi to hold a governmental position. He became Reich Minister of Interior in Hitler's Cabinet.



up and begged that proceedings might be postponed for half an hour. This was agreed to.

During this interval Papen informed the Nazis that he intended to dissolve the Reichstag whatever happened. Goering decided to forestall this consummation by the fall of the Government. Immediately after the reopening of the session he declared that the division on the Communist vote of no confidence had "begun". At that moment the Chancellor rose to his feet. But Goering refused to let him speak. "You can see for yourself that the vote is being taken!" Thereupon Papen waved the mysterious red portfolio<sup>1</sup> containing the decree dissolving the Reichstag, and, as Goering still did not respond, laid it down on the table before Goering. Then the Chancellor left the hall along with his ministers.

Herr Goering proceeded to take the vote and "confirmed" that the Papen Government had been defeated by 513 votes to 32. Only after having announced this did he pick up the decree of dissolution, read it out, and declare that the document was worthless because it was signed by a Government which had already fallen. "The Reichstag is not dissolved. The date of the next session will be made known to you by me."

The deputies dispersed. And Goering and Papen sat down and wrote each other insulting letters in which they accused each other of violating the Constitution!

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<sup>1</sup> By tradition, the decree dissolving the Reichstag is conveyed from the President to the Chancellor in a red portfolio. In this case, although the decree had been ready for days, Herr von Papen had forgotten to bring it with him, but, thanks to Dr. Frick's motion of adjournment, had time to go to the Chancellery for it!

The whole situation is a complete mess, and mistakes, it seems to me, were made by both sides. Moreover, Goering has threatened that he will summon the Reichstag to-morrow, no matter what happens. We have ordered the police and the garrison here to be ready, and also called out four infantry battalions. As far as we're concerned, hostilities can begin at any time. We are prepared for them.

All the same, the situation is serious enough. But to keep us from losing our sense of humour to-day, a few hours after the dissolution of the Reichstag *Vorwärts* had to come out with an official pronouncement of yesterday's date, according to which the Government "did not intend to dissolve the Reichstag. Any assertion to the contrary lacks substantial foundation." So there you are ! A model example of how compulsory publication (*Berichtigungszwang*) of official bulletins should not be employed !

To-night Papen spoke on the wireless. His voice quivered with rage at the treachery of his favourites. What he said was rubbish.

*13th September, 1932.*

Herr Goering has capitulated. And in a doubly pitiable fashion, after his theatrical phrases of yesterday. He takes back everything and promises, like a child afraid of the rod, that he will never summon the Reichstag again. He even gives up the Statutory Committee. More than that could hardly be required of him !

But the paper-war goes on. Goering has written a letter of apology to Hindenburg, in which he says

that Papen, "in his agitation", had laid the dissolution order on his table "with the blank side upwards", so that he, the President of the Reichstag, had thought that it was "an unwritten sheet of paper". This lying excuse is too stupid. Everybody in the hall knows what is happening, and not the President himself, of all people ! A too blatant manœuvre, genuine Goering !

*14th September, 1932.*

The National Socialist Press is foaming with rage at the Government. In their choice of abusive terms they are not exactly nice. And Papen is angrier than I have ever seen him before. He is considering whether he shouldn't prohibit the Storm Troops again ; what length these rascals will go to next is beyond conjecture. The terror and bloodshed that the special tribunals were to suppress is going on just as before without the authorities lifting a finger. But woe if a Communist or a Reichs Banner man even frowns ; in a minute he finds himself charged with high treason. And the police and the courts do what is asked of them. Like whores when they see a well-lined purse !

Herr Hitler has formed a Defence Corps of his own. Colonel Haselmayer is in command. With this ridiculous farce they have naturally won the heart of the Old Gentleman again, which, indeed, was obviously their intention. If the history of the Hindenburg era should ever be written, it will form a chapter recording the lowest abasement of the so-called German "spirit". Simply disgusting !

*18th September, 1932.*

I have been for three days in Frankfort-on-the-Oder preparing for the great Hindenburg manœuvres.

Here, meantime, the Kuratorium<sup>1</sup> for so-called military sports has been given an official blessing. Edwin von Stülpnagel,<sup>2</sup> the former commander of the second division, has been put in control ; Olberg is his chief of staff. The affair will cost a confounded lot of money, but will, in any case, repay us. Only we must see to it that the Nazis don't win too much influence over it.

The people have once more quieted down after the dissolution of the Reichstag. That is the comforting thing about the German : first he curses and swears blue murder, but after that he settles down contentedly.

*19th September, 1932.*

The new Reichstag elections are to take place on 6th November. I fancy that the Nazis will lose ; they have my blessing.

Otherwise nothing of importance. All preparations are being made for the great manœuvres, and we are recovering from the alarms of the last few weeks.

*23rd September, 1932.*

The manœuvres have passed off splendidly. The position was as follows :

The Red Army (General Boch) advances from the

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<sup>1</sup> The Kuratorium is the governing body for the promotion of athletic sports and physical efficiency. It is alleged to be a camouflaged organization for the military training of young recruits.

<sup>2</sup> A retired Lieutenant-General.

east against Berlin ; the Blue Army (General Rundstedt) tries to hold it up on the Oder line, so as to protect the capital. In order to approximate as nearly as possible to reality, the Red Army is equipped with all the latest motor devices, while the Blue Army acts in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Versailles Treaty.

The bearing of the troops was excellent, their physical condition first-class. Hammerstein, who conducted the manœuvres, should be satisfied. Tactically, the decisive superiority of the Red Army with their motor power was demonstrated ; and also that a river like the Oder no longer constitutes a real defensive obstacle. It is up to us to draw the obvious inferences as regards our western frontier.

The foreign Military Attachés seemed to be surprised ; they could scarcely have counted on such an impressive performance. I should have liked to see the faces of the French, Belgians, and Poles ; but needless to say they were not invited. Although these manœuvres really "touch" them most of all !

The attitude of the civil population was gratifying. They brought their children out to see us, down to the smallest ones. That is all to the good ; one cannot drill the idea of national defence too early into the young people, and with the help of military music it is twice as easy !

Here in Berlin nothing in particular has been happening. The Vigilance Committee of the Reichstag has summoned Herr Papen to appear before it ; the Chancellor has the "intention", so I hear, of obeying the summons.

To-morrow I'm off to the country for two days' hunting.

*26th September, 1932.*

Yesterday the French Prime Minister, Heriot, made an absolutely scandalous speech. Our neighbours would do well to concern themselves with setting their own house in order. And they'll have to put up with the fact that the time is past when Paris did nothing but command and Berlin did nothing but obey. And when they complain of our "warlike spirit" they should take the blame to themselves. Without the madness of the Versailles Treaty the madness of Hitlerism would have been impossible. And that they are being gradually forced now to reap the harvest they themselves have sown is quite as it should be, and, above all, perfectly just.

Count Kalkreuth<sup>1</sup> has sent us a memorandum as long as my arm, in which he tries to prove that German agriculture is bankrupt and can only be saved if legislation is passed to help it. An impudent demand! It doesn't seem to have dawned on the Count that it is the production of Canada and the Argentine that has ruined our farmers, not "Marxism", that dreadful bogey for timorous minds. And the fact that his fine friends are supported only by their unsurpassable arrogance and (for years past!) by the revenues of the State—that is all Greek to him!

But perhaps it isn't! For he tries very adroitly to draw a red herring across the track: large-scale

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<sup>1</sup> Chairman of the Land League.

agriculture is a "*potentiel de guerre*"! But the Old Gentleman will naturally be taken in by this pretence, and that's what its intention is too. One can't be a "squire" oneself without suffering for it!

*27th September, 1932.*

Goering has honoured me with a visit. He had two pieces of news: Hitler is ill, his nerves once more broken down, and is to be sent to a sanatorium. And Roehm is to be sent into the wilderness. He is to be replaced by Captain Pfeffer von Salomon, a Titan unknown to me.

*28th September, 1932.*

Papen, Gayl, and Planck to-day appeared before the Committee for the Preservation of the People's Rights. They were asked to give an account of the session of 12th September.

I should like to know what point there can be in this whole business now! The one side said this, the other said that, the one lied deliberately, and the other probably lied just as deliberately.

The "interrogation" threatened to become serious when Papen was asked on what day the dissolution order was signed. The Chancellor did the only thing possible: he refused to answer.

However, I have the impression that the affair is gradually fizzling out. After all, nothing can be altered now, for the Reichstag is dissolved and the new election already announced.

Accomplished facts carry great weight in political life too, it seems! Papen has told Schleicher that

he is going for a couple of days to West Germany to arrange with the industrial magnates that Hitler is to be kept on shorter rations. The blustering fool will have to see for himself how he is to pay the piper for his election campaign!

*30th September, 1932.*

The National Socialist Prime Minister of Anhalt, Herr Freyberg, announces in his newspapers that Anhalt will not take part in the celebrations of the eighty-fifth birthday of the Reichs President. "One" had no time just now for celebrations.

Gayl, who had hoped to score with the Old Gentleman by means of these celebrations, and to blot out and relegate to oblivion his failure with his constitutional reform measure, is beyond himself. He intends to set out for Anhalt himself and start a celebration "on behalf of the Reich".

*1st October, 1932.*

Herr Freyberg has been brought to heel by Hitler. He has issued an "official" declaration in the classical style and decries his announcement of yesterday as "a pack of lies from beginning to end". A genuine National Socialist proceeding!

Strasser has made a scandalous speech in Vienna to the annual conference of the Austrian Nazis. He said the diametrical opposite of all the things he had solemnly assured us of. And that he should drip with subservience to Hitler is, of course, very comprehensible, but painful as well when one recalls what he said to us a few days ago here about his chief.



Well, one should simply have no dealings with him, especially when, like Herr Strasser, he has no sense of shame. But Schleicher, unfortunately, has become infatuated with him.

Baron Eltz von Rübenach, the Transport Minister, has made a great speech on the value of aeroplane racing and stunt flying. This Santa Claus has nothing better to do, apparently, than to give all our foreign competitors a free present of our plans. And if the Press raises an outcry, of course it will be a canard again ! Schleicher has complained to the Old Gentleman about Rübenach.

*2nd October, 1932.*

The Hindenburg celebrations have taken their usual course. One thing I can't understand : that people always refer to the Old Gentleman's "memorable genius as a general" ; for it can no longer be concealed that in spite of that genius (evil tongues say, because of that genius ! ) we lost the war with flying colours.

The Alsace-Lorraine Club invited us to their rejoicings to-day ; unfortunately I had to go. The Nazis were there too, of course, and applauded wildly when the speakers spouted about Alsace and Lorraine "belonging eternally to Germany". That their chief long since sold South Tyrol, which belongs to us far more intimately than to Mussolini, never seems to occur to them !

*3rd October, 1932.*

It is three years to-day since Stresemann died. Official Germany and its "venerable and grateful"

Hindenburg have not taken the slightest notice of the fact. Whether one agreed with Stresemann in everything or not, he stood sky-high all the same above the whole crowd that encumber the ministerial benches to-day. With the possible exception of Schleicher.

*4th October, 1932.*

Hitler has to-day received an Italian journalist and made a furious attack on Papen to him, declaring that the Chancellor was to blame for all that has happened since 1918. He also made the Italian a richly farcical offer of alliance in the event of his becoming Chancellor. The clever "Leader" seems to be possessed by the mad notion that Mussolini will pursue a pro-German policy for the sake of Hitler's beautiful eyes and put aside Italy's own immediate needs. Awful, the possibility that this person might really come into power at some time!

*5th October, 1932.*

The Franco-Polish military alliance has been extended for another ten years. This isn't very gratifying news. But one had to reckon with it.

*6th October, 1932.*

At the Herren Club to-day the Chancellor outlined his plans for the reform of the Constitution. One cannot but support him in his desire to do away with the dualism between the Reich and

Prussia ; but, of course, this project was not of his own growing. I am equally of his opinion that the boy and girl franchise and the present method of voting on lists of candidates will not do, and must be swept away. The only question is, what is to be put in their place ? I should stick to proportional representation as the justest method, but combine it with the single candidature. So that at last individual personality might assume its rightful place again, and the caucus (in all parties !) lose its autocratic powers.

But I have grave apprehension of Papen's plans concerning the relative position of the President and the Cabinet. He wishes to make the Government subject only to the head of the State, and do away with the vote of no confidence. That will dangerously strengthen the position of the President and his camarilla, and seems to me also untimely in the highest degree.

Certainly, the vote of no confidence can be badly abused, as recent events in the Reich and the States have shown. Still, the suggestion of my friend St—— is really the only one that meets the case ; his idea is that a vote of no confidence passed in parliament should only come into force if parliament nominates simultaneously by a majority vote a candidate for the post of leader of the Government. But should that not happen, then the vote of no confidence must count as invalid. In this way abuses of the vote could be avoided and the nuisance of intriguing for power put a stop to—with Governments that are fallen, but must remain in office because no Government can be found to succeed them.



ADOLF HITLER  
Reich-Chancellor



*7th October, 1932.*

The election campaign is being fought savagely. The Nazis break up almost all their opponents' meetings. They have a particular spite at the Hugenberg crowd, who appeal despairingly to Papen and Gayl. Without achieving anything.

I'm going off for a few days' hunting. Thank God, another atmosphere for once in a way!

*12th October, 1932.*

Papen outlined his plans for the reform of the Constitution in Munich to-day. He did it very clumsily, as is his way. The content of his speech had no surprises for me. The pathos with which he spoke of "equality" of rights only amused me, however much the squires may have rubbed their hands.

The Leipzig trial, Prussia v. the Reich, has begun.<sup>1</sup> The representative of the deposed Government, Brecht, made a splendid show. The Prussian legal expert, Professor Heller,<sup>2</sup> was also prominent, infinitely superior to Papen's man. One only wishes that they had a different cause to defend and had not to stand up for a Government of deserters.

The Hohenzollerns have got wind that dawn is about to break; they are bestirring themselves as never before. Particularly Wilhelm junior, who is overwhelming us with letters whose contents, however, are too naïve to merit serious consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> After Papen's *coup* of July 20 had expelled the Braun administration from Prussia, an appeal was made, on the Constitutional issue, by the Socialists to the Supreme Court at Leipzig.

<sup>2</sup> Professor of Jurisprudence at the University of Berlin.

To-morrow the "private adjutant" of the former Kaiser, General von Dommes, is coming to see me. I am eager to know what he wants.

*13th October, 1932.*

The position of Papen (and Hindenburg!) in the Leipzig trial is becoming confoundingly embarrassing. But they have nothing to fear; for the Supreme Court cannot, of course, simply disavow the President of the Reich. That is obvious. And Herr Braun and Herr Severing never could have counted on anything else either; all that they were concerned with was to whitewash their débâcle a little for the sake of appearances.

General Dommes has been here. In a pompous harangue he explained to me the views of the "All-Highest". The Kaiser considers that the time has come for him to emerge from his retirement. "Accordingly" he has provided the means for founding a weekly journal to advocate his policy. *Fanal* is to be the name of this organ. General Dommes begged us to give it our support.

I told him quite bluntly that I regarded the whole business as hopeless, and that I could not conceive that Schleicher would have anything to do with it. I recommended General Dommes to advise the Kaiser strongly against a step that might put at hazard the last shred of authority that he still possessed. He would do better to save himself the expense.

Dommes was of a different opinion. He believed that the paper would be a success. I retorted that

in that case he could carry it on himself. Schleicher would certainly refuse. And even Papen was hardly stupid enough to have anything to do with it.

I fancy that I have fallen out of favour to-day. At any rate, Dommes did not take his leave in an exactly cordial spirit.

*14th October, 1932.*

Papen is pathetic. He has written a letter to Bumke, the president of the Supreme Court in Leipzig, assuring him that he had come to no agreement with Hitler about Prussia before the 20th of July. What about the circular sent out by Alvensleben,<sup>1</sup> in which it was stated clearly and concisely that the action against Prussia represented "part and parcel of the agreement between Papen and Hitler"? Alvensleben isn't a new-born baby after all! He sits on the committee of the Herren Club along with Papen, and is one of the Chancellor's most intimate friends and advisers.

Schleicher has joined the reformers of the Constitution. He wants to dissolve again at once the Reichstag that has not yet been elected, and then call together a National Assembly on the basis of a restricted franchise. This National Assembly should then decide by a simple majority for a "Presidential Constitution".

*15th October, 1932.*

The Crown Prince is getting busy. Being the "heir of the Supreme War Lord", he now naturally

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<sup>1</sup> Count Kurt von Alvensleben, a former favourite of the ex-Kaiser.



turns, he says, to the Army officers. With what hope he turns to us is not to be discovered from his letter. Schleicher has politely but firmly advised him to observe greater discretion, otherwise everything may be ruined.

*17th October, 1932.*

I have been for a day and a half in Brunswick. The training of our officers in the Flying School is going on vigorously, and the dropping of "mail bags" is splendid practice. The course is completed in eight days. Then another thirty-five are taken on, so that the "list" will soon be filled up. It is to be hoped that nobody spots it; that could cause unpleasant complications. Especially now that the so-called Disarmament Conference is sitting.

*18th October, 1932.*

Papen has another new idea. He wants to form a Presidential Council somewhat similar to the Crown Council in Wilhelm's time. The Presidential Council would only have advisory functions; the final decision would lie solely and entirely with the President himself. And whose would be the responsibility? Papen does not know that yet. But one thing he does know: that the innocent people will foot the bill!

Dollfuss's speech on Sunday made a good impression, although he did not say a single word about Germany. What strength the little man is showing! If it were not for his accursed connection with the Pope: that must not go on!

*19th October, 1932.*

To-morrow I go for a few days' leave. That is the most important thing I have to set down. Besides, the situation is fairly quiescent except for one thing : Papen is absolutely resolved to find a place for the former Crown Prince in one way or another. But he doesn't yet know how that is to be done. For the Old Gentleman has no inclination yet to abdicate and retire to Neudeck.

*28th October, 1932.*

I have not missed anything by being out of Berlin. Except being present at the birth of the "Kaiser Party". I should not have thought Count Spretti capable of countenancing such a piece of folly.

The result of the Leipzig trial has been still more painful than I had anticipated. Though it must be admitted that Papen behaved very clumsily.

I did not envy the Supreme Court its rôle. On the one hand, it had to condemn the violation of the Constitution, but on the other it dared not offend Hindenburg and had to decide that he was right, at least in effect. If for no other reason, because the whole business cannot simply be annulled.

Bumke has extricated himself with aplomb out of this dilemma. But there is an ample residue of bitterness left for Papen and the Old Gentleman.

To-day the Cabinet Council will meet to consider what is to be done as a result of the Leipzig verdict. They will not give way in any case. On the contrary !

People don't give a straw nowadays for a few violations of the Constitution more or less, and it makes no great difference either if the Old Gentleman twists his oath to his own purposes one time or seven times.

I have had only a few words with Schleicher. He will use the verdict in any case after the election to give Papen the push he has deserved for a long time.

The Nazis have grown impudent again. They intend to concentrate their troops round Berlin on the 6th November. Excellent! That can only suit our book.

*29th October, 1932.*

I was at Bitterfeld to-day inspecting the gas factory. I have never before seen such a marvellous laboratory. Miraculous in its perfection!

Highly interesting are the experiments that are being carried on with animals and plants. At any rate, it has been demonstrated that the stuff works even when diluted to the last degree; in other words, with a trifling amount one could gas any large city. And destroy life; that is the main point. Ten of our ordinary passenger aeroplanes could in normal circumstances carry the necessary dose for a million and a half human beings.

The labour question is creating difficulties. Needless to say only tried men have been taken on—men belonging almost exclusively to the Steel Helmets. Recently, however, several bands of them have gone over to the Nazis, and the works management does

not count very much on their silence. Nor do I ; and all the less considering that these rascals threatened more or less plainly to blab—unless Papen came to an agreement with Hitler. Open blackmail, with treason as the means ; but what can one do against it ?

Prince Hubert of Prussia<sup>1</sup> came to say good-bye to me. He is leaving to-night on a tour of the former German colonies, and in the hope of winning back the hearts of the black men for Germany.

*30th October, 1932.*

The election battle is at its height. Everybody unanimously tells me that Hitler's drawing power is slowly but surely weakening. One thing is certain : the new Reichstag will not show a Black and Brown majority. Nor a majority of the Right either, unless it is decided simply to disqualify the Communist vote, which I am convinced would be an insane mistake.

The Nazis, as is understandable enough from their point of view, demand this coup, so as to increase their preponderance ; but Papen and Hugenberg, the latter most emphatically, refuse, for their position would only become still weaker if the Brown Shirts were strengthened. In any case, the decision will not be known until the election day.

Stülpnagel gives us gratifying reports of the Kuratorium for military sports. The affair seems to be in good hands.

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<sup>1</sup> Third son of the Crown Prince.

The officers' associations have sent out an appeal unanimously recommending their members to vote at the election only for those parties which pledge themselves "with no uncertain voice" to reinstate the Hohenzollern monarchy.

*2nd November, 1932.*

I have been for a couple of days in Eisenach and Plauen. The trench-mortars, the big ones particularly, are magnificent playthings. We were without this type during the War, otherwise many things might have turned out differently. Performance first-class, variations and disturbances practically eliminated. And in effectiveness absolutely unbeatable! According to reports from abroad we are in the vanguard of culture in this respect too. The *Vomag*<sup>1</sup> in Plauen made an excellent impression upon me. The manufacture of new tanks is in full progress. The business is so organized that many of the workers in the firm have not the slightest knowledge of what they are working on. In one of the tanks we made a night excursion over very rough ground to the Czechoslovakian frontier. The tank showed first-class capacity and, above all, incredible speed even when going across country.

One has a splendid view of everything from the commander's stance. The machine-guns are mounted with extraordinary skill. On the main roads the things run on ordinary wheels so as to get up top speed without attracting attention ; with a few turns

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<sup>1</sup> The Vogtland Machine Factories which specialize in making tanks.

of a lever the caterpillar wheels can be brought into action without one even leaving one's seat. And a tank of the most modern pattern is there complete !

Here in Berlin there is great excitement. The conflict between Papen and Bavaria is becoming critical.

*3rd November, 1932.*

Schleicher is still away on leave. He is not expected back before the day after to-morrow. And here everything is in confusion. All the transport workers in Berlin have gone on strike : not a street car is running, not an underground train, not a single bus.

I was lately in Fürstenwald seeing Pintsch.<sup>1</sup> They asked leave to show us a new apparatus for the dispersion of gas. This device, which is intended for use in the front-line trenches, seemed quite a good one. I demanded a proper test, as the matter did not seem immediately urgent. For the time being we are fore-armed, and not too badly either.

The rumours that the Nazis intend to risk a coup on the election day are thickening. We have given orders for increased vigilance. We are prepared for anything that may happen.

*4th November, 1932.*

The transport strike is becoming serious. The Social Democratic trade union leaders are playing a pitiable rôle : they keep on applying the brake, and

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<sup>1</sup> A factory especially for the manufacture of gas apparatus.

are surprised that they are losing all influence with the masses.

Papen has the intention of asking the Old Gentleman to declare a state of martial law and so cow the strikers. I urgently warned him against it. In no case can it be done before Schleicher returns.

*5th November, 1932.*

Schleicher is back again and has categorically refused to mix up the Reichswehr with the transport strike.<sup>1</sup> Papen is furious.

Otherwise all is quiet in eager anticipation of to-morrow's election. The Nazis have called off their armed concentration. A pity! I should have liked to have these gentlemen for once in front of our guns!

*6th November, 1932.*

Herr Hitler has lost two million votes! I heartily wish him joy of them. Herr Hugenberg has won a million and almost fifty per cent in seats. The Socialists have once more lost three-quarters of a million, while the Communists now muster six millions and for the first time have won a hundred seats. And that must mean something!

But the decisive thing is this: the Black and Brown majority, that dangerous rock of offence in the old Reichstag, is gone. And a majority of the Right without the help of the Centre has become impossible. And any other majorities are at best

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<sup>1</sup> The Nazis and Communists had united in calling a general transport strike on the eve of the election.

theoretic arithmetical possibilities. So the country must be governed without the Reichstag! Bravo!

Herr Hitler has lost his battle of the Marne. If we don't make any too bad blunders now his dream has been dreamed once and for all.

Schleicher is very well pleased. He will break with Papen now, whose number has long been up in any case.

*7th November, 1932.*

The transport strike has fizzled out! Thanks to the scandalous conduct of the Nazis and the miserable slackness of the free trade unions. The Communists held out splendidly, and have demonstrated that even a strong Government would be powerless against a strike if the workers showed a united front.

We have in Berlin round about 25,000 transport workers; confronting these were at least 50,000 police armed with every modern weapon. And yet they could do nothing. What would have happened if all the workers, and not merely the transport workers, had gone on strike? We should have been smashed to smithereens!

*8th November, 1932.*

Herr Hitler has broken down (for the umpteenth time) and gone into a sanatorium. So Gregor Strasser reports. He, Strasser, sees the "possibility of a fruitful collaboration between Schleicher and at least one part of the National Socialist Party in the Reichstag", and writes that he will soon be in Berlin and come to see us.



Papen, the General informs me, is very well pleased and goes about with a satisfied look. Although at best he can have no more than a tenth of the Reichstag behind him. He may be as pleased as he likes, he'll have to go all the same ; Schleicher will insist on Papen's dismissal.

What Government will there be ? Will the old one remain ? Schleicher has proposed to Hindenburg that meantime he should see the political leaders of the various States and sound them.

How naïve Papen really can be sometimes ! Yesterday, with the election results, he got a knock on the head hard enough to lay him out, and to-day he gets up before the whole world and declares that Herriot's disarmament plan provides a suitable basis of discussion for Germany. I should like to know what Germany the man really represents ! Certainly not the Germany most concerned with the question of armaments ; I can show him that in black and white !

Schleicher has protested to Hindenburg against this piece of foolery.

*9th November, 1932.*

The bargaining has begun. Chancellor von Papen has brought himself to the point of approaching the parties of the Right and the Centre concerning the possibility of expanding the basis of the Government. He has already received his first answer, from Herr Goering : the Chancellor, Herr Goering states, has not enough backing to open such negotiations.

Herr Papen is of course too innately thick-

headed for that to keep him from trying to find a way of salvation in spite of everything. "National concentration" is the slogan—a worn and hackneyed one that recalls the days of the struggle in the Ruhr, but now, it seems, is to be furbished anew by Papen.

The blatant and impudent outpourings of the Nazi Press just now would be sufficient to fill a library. If those in power could only make up their minds for whole measures! That would also be the best preparation for the getting together of a Government. For, after all, Hitler and Goering don't understand any language but hard knocks.

*10th November, 1932.*

The South German Governments have declared unanimously against Papen. Bavaria in particular uses very blunt language, and accuses the Chancellor of waging only a sham fight against the treasonable plans of the Nazis. To disarm this objection, Papen (of course after previous consultation with Hitler's representatives here!) has banned the *Völkischer Beobachter*<sup>1</sup> for three days. And the Munich Government is delighted!

This double-dealing is nauseating! We have now reached the fine pass that no man can believe another without running the risk of being let down in every way.

Papen is resolved to get out of Hindenburg an official mandate to treat with the other parties for

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<sup>1</sup> The national organ of the Nazi Party, originally edited by Hitler himself, Now the official newspaper of the Government.

the formation of a new Government under his Chancellorship.

He flatters himself that he will possess more authority then.

*11th November, 1932.*

The Reichstag is to be dissolved again if the negotiations with the various parties, which Papen initiated to-day in all formality and with abundant lack of skill, should fail. Whether there will be another election after that is still very doubtful. In any case, Papen is clinging to his position in a fashion that makes one almost ashamed for him.

The Nazis are negotiating behind the scenes with the Centre Party in the hope of solving the Prussian question. Their candidate for the Premiership is Dr. Goerdeler, the Burgomaster of Leipzig, our one-time "Prize Commissioner". Herr Goerdeler has reserved his decision meanwhile ; naturally, he will accept only if he sees no prospect of sharing the same fate as Braun of blessed memory.

Papen knows of these things, which are carried to him continually by "friends" in both camps, as is a matter of course in "Nationalist" circles. Should Goerdeler accept, Papen will dissolve the Prussian Landtag before the election of the Prime Minister can take place. A barefaced violation of the Constitution ! But what does the Constitution matter nowadays, or an oath of allegiance either, to men of that kind ?

Herr Hitler announces through his paper, the *Völkischer Beobachter*, that he declines to treat with

Papen. Whether this refusal holds good only for himself, or for his party as well, is not clear, and he prudently refrains from saying.

*12th November, 1932.*

A ray of light. New strategical railway lines are to be constructed in West Germany : in the direction of the Saar and in the Palatinate. Papen's first sensible achievement. He does not intend to do anything about railway lines in Upper Silesia at the moment : Schwerin-Krosigk maintains that there is no money available.

Strasser called on us to-day. He was raging at the "megalomaniac" Hitler, and suggested to us that he, Strasser, should enter the Government when the moment was auspicious. He had a whole crowd of Nazis behind him ; and still more could be won over if good posts in the Prussian administration could be secured for them. That was the "sole" thing that counted, he remarked, laughing. Well, he must know his own comrades !

*13th November, 1932.*

I have been for a few hours in Breslau by aeroplane. At Lincke-Hoffmann's.<sup>1</sup> I am not quite satisfied with their new tanks ; at any rate, the *Vomag* tanks pleased me much better. As far as mobility is concerned both types are roughly equal, but the firing range of Lincke-Hoffmann's machine-guns leaves much to be desired.

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<sup>1</sup> Motor-vehicle manufacturers.

Lincke-Hoffmann intend—and that was the reason for my journey—to try to fit in a light field-gun. The attempt must be made.

Here in Berlin, Gayl, our Santa Claus, has meanwhile “invented” a new plan. He wants to give the Reichstag a compulsory holiday before it even meets. For reason of “national necessity”. (National necessity : that is only another name for “Herren Club necessity”.)

I am eager to see what will finally come of all this intrigue. Something must happen soon if the Old Gentleman doesn't want to be left in the soup.

*14th November, 1932.*

Papen is getting one facer after another. But he refuses to give up the running all the same. It must be lovely after all to play at being Chancellor !

Now he wants to dissolve the Reichstag, decree a new restricted franchise, and have another election in January. Schleicher has entered his protest ; such a thing can only be done by a new Government with a new Chancellor at its head. Papen visibly collapsed at this attack. And the members of the Cabinet are beginning to desert him. Schwerin-Krosigk in particular seems no longer inclined to hush up his Chancellor's stupidities. For which I can't blame him !

*15th November, 1932.*

Herr Goering has summoned the Reichstag for the 6th of December.



DR. ALFRED HUGENBERG  
Former Minister in Hitler's Cabinet



Papen's negotiations have not yet produced any effect ; but there can be little doubt that they will fail. Schleicher keeps out of it all, except that on occasion he repeats his categorical statement that Papen has become impossible as Chancellor.

Oskar Hindenburg came to-day at his father's bidding to get from Schleicher an exposé of his Agrarian policy, should he become Chancellor.

Herr Hitler is resolved to keep his memory green ! He knows the Old Gentleman's weaknesses and has suggested a project to us. The most absurd scheme that has ever come into my hands ; Hitler calls it a "constructive" plan, and admits in doing so that he has to pinch even his catch-words from the French.

This is what he wants. Germany shall make a military convention with Russia, the chief heads of which he has kindly outlined. Then we are to seize the first favourable opportunity to make war on France and Poland and, thereupon, when our business in the west has been thoroughly settled, make an alliance with France and Poland against Russia. The Franco-German frontiers will remain unchanged, the Polish Corridor and Dantzig will come over to Germany, also the Baltic provinces. Poland will receive the Ukraine and other parts of Russia ; France the decisive spheres of interest in South Russia.

I must frankly say that a more fatuous view of world history is scarcely possible. But the whole business was not fatuous enough to prevent Hindenburg from requesting us to give him our



"report" on it. "Along with the necessary maps and charts."

And Hitler is cock of the walk again, of course ! Until the next time ! And that's what is called "Presidential politics" ! It makes one sick.

*16th November, 1932.*

The Social Democrats decline to treat with Papen. I had scarcely credited them with so much resolution. Hindenburg is furious, of course, because no one will accept "his" authorized candidate.

The Old Gentleman had a long consultation with Schleicher to-day. The latter demanded in unmistakable terms that Papen should resign, but Hindenburg still refuses to hear of it.

A grave collision of opinion arose between Hindenburg and Schleicher over our exposé of our Agrarian policy. Hindenburg considered our plans "Bolshevistic" ; they reminded him of Brüning, whom he had sent into the wilderness because he held the "same" ideas. His own estate of Neudeck produced practical proof every day that the present legislation was completely inadequate, and was methodically ruining landed property. And that must never be permitted ; without a sound landed property class the country could never be defended in case of war, and the troops at the front would starve of hunger in a few weeks.

Schleicher put himself to all conceivable trouble to drive this nonsense from the Old Gentleman's mind. But it was hopeless. The Squire of Neudeck simply would not understand. It's tragic.

*17th November, 1932.*

At to-day's meeting of the Cabinet the Government decided to tender its resignation to the President, as all negotiations with the other parties had failed. So Papen will call on the Old Gentleman to-morrow.

Herr Hitler, who sees his stock once more rising, has arrived in Berlin and laid a comprehensive "Governmental Manifesto" before the President. He has a good nose for whatever mood of the Old Gentleman may be on top ; consequently his programme, which extends to seventeen pages of written matter, contains only two points that can be seized upon, round which all the rest revolve.

Firstly, Germany must arm so as to be prepared for the approaching "war of liberation under the proved command of Your Excellency". "Until that hour comes" the other nations must be put off by all manner of possible and impossible subterfuges, and the "enemies at home prevented from stabbing the Army in the back". Further, German youth must be "educated in the new spirit".

Secondly, there must be a methodical extension of the "new agricultural policy, the estates must be freed of debt, so as to equip them to play their part in case of war". Further, "measures must be taken to make landed property a paying proposition in itself".

No wonder that after his rebuff from Schleicher yesterday, Hindenburg should see once more in Hitler the great man with whom one can "quite well carry

out a reasonable policy". Of course, he does not see through the clumsy fraud, and no one in his exalted circle will enlighten him ! That they all may go on sticking together somehow or other.

*18th November, 1932.*

Papen and his Cabinet have to-day formally resigned. Hindenburg accepted their resignation "provisionally", and now intends to negotiate directly with the various parties. I wish him joy of his task !

Hammerstein to-day made a very foolish speech at Schweinau, near Nürnberg. Why on earth should one publish one's private thoughts, one's intentions and achievements, to the whole world ? It only arouses new suspicion. It would not matter if all our preparations were complete. But Hammerstein knows himself that that, unfortunately, is not the case !

Hitler is to be received to-morrow by Hindenburg.

*19th November, 1932.*

Yesterday Hugenberg and Kaas were with Hindenburg. Hugenberg naturally declined to listen to any proposal that even smacked of the Constitution or of parliamentary government : Kaas was of the opposite point of view. He declared the Centre Party's willingness to take part in any Government that was constitutional and pursued constitutional aims.

Hitler appeared in the Palace to-day. The interview lasted for a full hour. Hindenburg went into the whole question very frankly and exhaustively with him ; once or twice Meissner was actually sent out of the room,

To the first question that Hindenburg asked, whether Hitler and his party were prepared to collaborate in a Cabinet controlled by Papen or Gessler (a new favourite of the Old Gentleman), Hitler gave a blunt refusal. He could only accept responsibility for a Government of which he himself was the head. Such a Government was possible ; with the German Nationalists and the Centre Party behind them the National Socialists were in a position to command a majority.

Hindenburg next asked to be given a rough outline of the Brown Shirts' Agrarian programme ; Hitler acquitted himself of this task with such skill that the Old Gentleman instructed him to find out "whether and under what conditions a Government led by Hitler, and possessing a safe and lasting majority, could be formed". The President, however, reserved to himself the power of sanctioning the appointment of the various ministers, and insisted particularly that Hitler would have no right to put forward any suggestions or make any conditions concerning the appointment of the War Minister and the Foreign Minister.

Hitler accepted these instructions, and requested that the various heads should be given him in writing, which was done.

I am really surprised. Not at Hindenburg, but at Hitler, who all at once seems to be prepared to venture into the sphere of the parliamentary system so long and so violently calumniated by him. For the outcome of the affair we shall have to wait.

*20th November, 1932.*

Schleicher and I were with the Old Gentleman to-day. On military business. At the finish he made a passing mention of his instructions to Hitler yesterday, and observed venomously, with a side-hit at Schleicher: "Now this East German Relief trouble will be properly handled at last!"

It is shameful to see the arguments on which the politics of our new Germany are made to depend. Whether the country is brought to ruin by this policy doesn't matter a damn to these people.

Hitler is busily negotiating and writing letters. Negotiating with the various parties and writing letters to Hindenburg. The very first day after receiving his "instructions" he seems to have found a fly in the ointment, and absolutely insists that his Cabinet must be an "authoritative" one. But Hindenburg is scared of that.

*21st November, 1932.*

Papen has suddenly become very apprehensive lest Herr Hitler should succeed in patching together a parliamentary majority after all. He is working hard behind the scenes, zealously supported by Hugenberg.

Meanwhile, Hitler is wrangling with Meissner; he wants to know how this and that is to be construed. A Jewish horse-dealer could learn a lot from this "Dictator" with his whining anxiety for power!

*22nd November, 1932.*

To-day Hitler once more begged for an audience. The Old Gentleman was by no means gracious, Meissner says. He demanded "finally" a definite decision.

Hindenburg sticks to it that Hitler must possess a parliamentary majority and pledge himself to act in strict accordance with the Constitution. Moreover, he is not to appoint the Reichs Commissioner in Prussia; there Papen remains the favoured candidate.

That Papen's economic programme will be retained, that the emergency regulations of an economic nature already in force will continue, is for Hindenburg a matter of course. Schleicher himself is not unsympathetic to this solution, if it should come to pass; in any case, he is determined that the Reichswehr is not to be left isolated.

Through his Press Hitler has published a "provisional" ministerial list: Chancellor, Hitler; Home Affairs, Strasser; Justice, Frick; War, Schleicher; Finance, Schacht; Business, Thyssen; Air Service, Goering; Prussia, Papen. The other ministries will be divided between the Centre Party and Hugenberg's followers; Neurath is to retain the Foreign Ministry.

*23rd November, 1932.*

Hitler has come a cropper! And chiefly on Hugenberg's intransigence. He has written a pathetic letter to the President begging to be empowered to

form an "authoritative" Cabinet "without proviso and without first securing a majority in the Reichstag".

General Director Cuno<sup>1</sup> has arrived here to make one more attempt to mediate between Hindenburg and Hitler. He sees the possibility, he tells us, of an "authoritative" Cabinet under Schacht's Chancellorship ; Hitler is agreeable as long as he is Vice-Chancellor and Blomberg Minister of War, and if the Vice-Chancellor, in other words himself, is made Reichs Commissioner of Prussia as well.

This plan has little hope of success. For now Schleicher, who would, of course, find himself without a job, is going all out and fighting for his position.

*24th November, 1932.*

The alarm has passed over and Hindenburg has sent the "Dictator" home again. A bitter pill for Hitler : "I feel that I could not answer for my action to the German people if I, its President, were to appoint as my plenipotentiary representative the leader of a party which has again and again emphasized its exclusiveness. I fear that a Presidential Cabinet led by Herr Hitler would inevitably develop into a party dictatorship, with the evil result of intensifying still more the dissensions within the German nation, and I cannot answer to my oath and my conscience for taking such a step."

Surely never before has the head of a State pronounced so clearly and definitely against a specified

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Wilhelm Cuno, Director-General of the Hamburg-Amerika Line. Chancellor of the Reich during the occupation of the Ruhr. Died in 1933.

party ! For Hindenburg acknowledges in more or less dry terms that his oath forbids him to deliver power to Hitler.

It's to be hoped that he will stick to his "oath" !

*25th November, 1932.*

Hindenburg is continuing his negotiations. To-day he sent for Herr Kaas and enquired of him if he could form a majority Cabinet. The leader of the Centre Party is going to get in touch with the other parties. The business is hopeless, however. For now the Nazis refuse to take part.

Papen, who has been keeping very quiet these last few days, has emerged once more. He dreams of dissolving the Reichstag before it even assembles ; he reckons that a new election would reduce the Nazi vote by a half.

*26th November, 1932.*

Herr Kaas, after having approached everyone, including even Hitler and Hugenberg, has declined with thanks the task allotted to him. Hindenburg has now summoned General Schleicher ; I expect that Schleicher will be asked to form a Government. For the opposition to a new Papen Cabinet grows day by day ; Bracht, Schwerin-Krosigk, and Neurath are fanning the blaze. The last, doubtless, simply because he would dearly like to be Chancellor himself and see his creature, Bülow, the man of might, as Foreign Minister.



*27th November, 1932.*

Schleicher yesterday received instructions to "attempt" a Government. He fought against this proposal tooth and nail, but finally had to accept it for better or for worse. Will he bring it off? He has no great belief himself in his chance of success. But the great danger is that Papen might return again if Schleicher does not succeed. This is the accursed dilemma in which he is caught!

Schleicher will strive to get the Reichstag on his side. He will only employ the weapon of dissolution as a last resort. First, he will try negotiation; but not only with the Right; above all, with the trade unionists and the Social Democrats.

*28th November, 1932.*

A coil of intrigues! Papen is moving heaven and earth to destroy Schleicher's hopes of success. And the land proprietors have woken up and are already fulminating against Schleicher's land-settlement plans (which nobody knows anything about yet).

Breitscheid was with Schleicher to-day. He refused to support a Schleicher Cabinet. Otte<sup>1</sup> did not say no for the Christian Trade Unions; if this man could be harnessed along with Strasser something could be done. Eggert<sup>2</sup> and Leipart<sup>3</sup> still don't know what course to take; and we can't afford to lose much time.

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<sup>1</sup> Chairman of the Christian Trade Unions.

<sup>2</sup> Chairman of the Social Democratic Trade Unions.

<sup>3</sup> Leader of the Social Democratic Trade Unions.

*29th November, 1932.*

The attack on Schleicher by the Agrarians has impressed the Old Gentleman. He sent for Schleicher to-day and put the question to him whether he would be prepared to collaborate in a third Papen Cabinet as Minister of War and Vice-Chancellor. Schleicher declined in the most unmistakable terms, and declared that Papen had become unendurable not only to him, but to the Reichswehr in general. Great ill-humour!

Schleicher has telegraphed to Hitler inviting him to come to Berlin for a consultation, seeing that the Social Democratic Trade Unions have not yet managed to come to a decision.

Meanwhile, Papen has got hold of our Otte and offered him the portfolio of Minister of Labour in the third Papen Cabinet. Otte doesn't know what to reply; that is in the real Centre Party style, to have several irons in the fire!

*30th November, 1932.*

Hitler declines to come to Berlin for a consultation. A good thing. Leipart's refusal, too, has since arrived, which is also good.

I have advised Schleicher to go on with the formation of his Cabinet in spite of these things and confront the Reichstag with the accomplished fact. We shall see on the 6th of December whether these gentlemen have the courage to show fight. If he, as the new Chancellor, pursues a clear policy from the very start and dissociates himself definitely from Papen's follies, he will be given fair play all right.

Schleicher is to see Hindenburg to-morrow. Unfortunately, I must go to Dresden and Radebeul to inspect the gas factories. The people there have hit upon new inventions which may be of the greatest importance to us.

*1st December, 1952.*

What has been happening here in Berlin I have had no time to find out. I did not get back from Saxony until after midnight. But according to the newspaper reports, Schleicher has brought it off!

## PART THREE

*The Chancellorship of General von Schleicher,  
2nd December, 1932, to 30th January, 1933.*



*2nd December, 1932.*

At last. Schleicher became Chancellor to-day. He has also, of course, retained the Ministry of War.

It has been a difficult birth—transverse presentation, a consulting physician would have said. At the very last moment the whole business threatened to mess itself up again.

All the things that "friend" Papen has vamped up during the last few days in the way of intrigues, not to forget his canards in the Press, would be enough to fill a library. He has mobilized everybody, including the maddest people, for him and his vanities. His megalomania is refreshing; besides him, Franz the First, there is, of course, nobody in Germany capable of playing Chancellor.

Hitler was expected here to-day for a further interview with Schleicher. He left Munich last night according to programme, but did not arrive here, for Goering and Goebbels hauled him out of his sleeper at Jena in the middle of the night and carted him off to Weimar. This exploit was so unexpected that not even Strasser and Frick were informed, and had to cool their heels in vain early this morning at the Anhalter Station (in Berlin). In the Presidential palace, Hitler's defection put them all into a great flurry and a still greater irritation.

The Old Gentleman was in a towering passion.

Hitler had promised him to come to Berlin and raise no difficulties!

Besides, Hitler himself doesn't know what he wants. The number of times he has swung from one extreme to another during those last weeks simply can't be counted. One moment Strasser, who claims to be striving for a loyal collaboration with us, has the upper hand, and ten minutes later, without any visible reason, Herr Goering with his all or nothing policy is on top. With such creatures one can naturally do very little.

But finally it proved too much of a good thing. Herr von Papen's own ministerial colleagues turned upon him and flung him out. With an audible thud! They wrote a friendly letter to the President telling him that they declined to take part in any suggested third Cabinet formed by that gentleman.

That was this morning. An hour later Herr Frick brought an announcement from Hitler that the Nazis would oppose a Schleicher Cabinet just as they had opposed Papen's. A fine dose for Hindenburg and the wire-pullers of Neudeck.

Hindenburg was indignant. Not so much with Hitler, as with the ministers of the Reich for daring to have views of their own in opposition to the "orders of the Field Marshal". And that they had sent a joint letter signed by them all knocked the bottom out of everything. That smacked of "mutiny", of "revolution". That was sheer rebellion against the supreme power, which, as everybody knows, is "from God"!

Furious, he sent for Schleicher. The General was



ELARD VON OLDENBURG-JANUSCHAU  
Feudal proprietor. Chamberlain of the ex-King of Prussia.





very ungraciously received, and Hindenburg was full of biting accusations against "certain people best unnamed". He, the President of the Reich, had lost all pleasure in his office ; he felt like retiring altogether from politics, the sooner the better. And if it were not for his grave anxiety about the critical state of agriculture, which would always be a burden on his conscience, he would have retired long ago.

Hindenburg is persuaded in all seriousness that Papen's mission was brought to grief not by the complete incapacity of the late Chancellor, shall we say, but by "the secret machinations of other people, whom I'll soon root out !" Then : "It's high time that the people were talked to in good plain German," the old man said, lifting his voice and raising his fist. "For that reason we must have a General as Chancellor of the Reich !"

At first Schleicher defended himself tooth and nail. To step into the evil legacy left by Papen was not an alluring prospect. He said this quite frankly, and received in acknowledgment an angry and spiteful glance from Hindenburg. Schleicher then went on to say that he was in a sense the last reserve they had for the post of Chancellor. And last reserves should never be called out prematurely. Yet the Old Gentleman persisted obstinately in his determination : they had "refused him Papen". And "consequently" the critical moment had now come and "You must take it on !"

As I have said, Schleicher is Chancellor. I have had only a short talk with him. He will retain his quarters here for the time being, as Papen has no

intention of vacating the Chancellor's palace. Hindenburg has given him express permission to remain. I can't understand Schleicher's submitting to such rudeness. But he seems resolved to get himself firmly seated in the saddle to begin with ; perhaps his tactics are not unwise. That the Old Gentleman absolutely dotes on Papen can be read from the letter he wrote accepting his resignation. If things were as they should be in this fine Germany of ours, and if Hindenburg had any understanding of merit and justice, then he should have written at least a whole volume to Brüning when he dismissed him.

Schleicher is treating with his future colleagues about the Cabinet. I fancy that he will have no difficulties.

So far, all seems to be promising splendidly. And if Schleicher takes a proper hold of things and Hindenburg does not keep on obstructing him, then there is much to be done and much to be gained. But I don't quite trust this armistice !

*3rd December, 1932.*

Herr Hitler's modesty is touching ! To-day Hindenburg has received a long letter from him (in his "public meeting" style : half-impudent and half-devout), explaining that "in the future also" he would "always" be ready to take over supreme power in the Reich. But any Cabinet save his own he would refuse to acknowledge, and would oppose with all the means at his disposal.

"Supreme power" is good. Herr Thaelmann,<sup>1</sup> too, would no doubt be ready to take it over. And I am even convinced that he would know better what to do with it than Herr Hitler of all people. If ever this fellow should get into power, then good-bye Germany, good-bye Europe!

There don't seem to be many changes in the Cabinet. Gayl, that impossible figure, has been replaced by Bracht, the Prussian Commissioner, as Minister of Home Affairs; with that the Neudeck plans for the alteration of the Constitution are probably buried for good. Then Schaeffer, the Minister of Labour, is to be sent into well-deserved exile; who is to take his place is not yet decided. In any case, however, a man with some idea of a social programme. Perhaps Seldte;<sup>2</sup> that wouldn't be a bad notion. And with him the Steel Helmets would be definitely won for us.

Little has been seen of Schleicher to-day. He's terribly busy. But then, as he says that he intends to remain in office for four years at least, he'll have lots of opportunity to re-establish contact with us.

I had a long talk with Oskar Hindenburg in the Herren Club. He is quite cheerful and optimistic. He called the Schleicher Cabinet the yoke of the Caudine Forks for Hitler. He is firmly convinced that we shall succeed either in harnessing the Nazis to responsibility on our own terms and under our

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<sup>1</sup> Ernst Thaelmann, a Communist Deputy in the Reichstag and Chairman of the Party, Presidential candidate in the elections of 1925 and 1932. Arrested after the coming to power of the Nazis.

<sup>2</sup> Franz Seldte, first leader and founder of the Stahlhelm, became Minister of Labour in Hitler's Cabinet and adopted the views of the Chancellor at once.

command, or else in dissipating their forces completely by a succession of new elections. I too am of that opinion ; but, of course, it will only come off if other people (Papen for instance) refrain from perpetual interference.

I led the conversation to the stubborn rumour that the Nazis were preparing for a *coup d'état*. Oskar Hindenburg commented : "If they would only make up their minds to oblige us in that way ! I've been waiting a long time for it, so as to get the chance of routing them. But will Hitler do it ? He'll play with the idea all right, and that doesn't need any courage. But as for carrying it out ? Of course, he's silly enough for it.

Schleicher has had a splendid Press. They compare him with Napoleon, and he is being lauded in advance as the "hidden hand" of Germany. "For many years already he has influenced, if not determined, the political course of Germany from his modest obscurity behind the scenes."

Hugenberg is cursing, naturally. So he has apparently grasped that the Schleicher Cabinet does not mean a betterment of his position. That is all to the good, anyway.

The Nazis have been struck dumb ; everything has been arranged so quickly. But I fear that this desirable state of things will not last long, and they will make up for their silence in overwhelming measure.

Schleicher had intended to talk over his plans with us to-day. But he hasn't managed to do so ; the drawing up of his list of Ministers has prevented

him, but he hopes to have it definitely completed by to-morrow morning.

*4th December, 1932.*

The new Cabinet is formed to the last man. Syrup is the new Minister of Labour ; Hindenburg refused to tolerate Seldte. Syrup's second-in-command is Gereke. *Persona gratissima* with the Old Gentleman, because he helped to turn the scale in the Presidential election.

Schleicher has been negotiating to-day with Goering, the President of the Reichstag, over the programme for the session, which will begin on the 6th of December. Goering comported himself flawlessly and was immaculately courteous ; he even went the length of offering his congratulations. "Only," however, he added with a smile, in his capacity as President of the Reichstag, not as a leader of the National Socialists.

It appears that the Nazis are agreed that the new Reichstag should be adjourned immediately after its opening until the beginning of January, and that only then the Schleicher programme (not yet known) should be debated. Goering intends to advise Hitler, who is expected here to-morrow, to that effect, but he explained that this possible agreement of the National Socialists to the adjournment must not by any means be interpreted to mean that they, the Brown Shirts, were prepared to support the new Government.

Goering then tentatively raised the Prussian question. Schleicher, who first wished to wait for

the results of to-day's poll in Thuringia, declined to discuss this point with the ironical excuse that Herr Goering had expressly emphasized that he had come only in his capacity as President of the Reichstag. Goering smiled sourly, and the reception was at an end.

In the evening at Schleicher's. He has clever and novel ideas. One must allow him that. Whether he succeeds with them, whether, when he comes to the decisive point, he will be strong enough, is another question. I am full of apprehension and dread at this chaos of intrigue in which our "aristocratic" class is involved.

What does Schleicher want?

He has now practically accepted the line of policy which we have been discussing together for months. He wants to gain time so as to build a "Cabinet of soldiers and trade unionists"—a Government that will have the support of the left wing of the Hitler Party (Strasser), the trade union wing of the Centre Party (Brüning, Stegerwald), the Social Democratic trade unions (Leipart, Tarnow), and the Steel Helmets (Seldte). He himself will retain control, so as to be able to settle at any time the dissensions within the Cabinet that might very possibly arise.

Until this plan is ready to be set in action he intends to pursue an unconditional policy of conciliation, and give way on particular points so as to take the wind out of the sails of the opposition on both sides. Naturally, Papen's emergency measures, with their social impossibilities, will be cleared away at once.

Schleicher does not expect to have much opposition from the Reichstag, and fancies, indeed, that they will give him fair play to begin with. Should things turn out differently, and the Reichstag reject him after all, then he will remain in office and carry out his work "if need be for four years", and proclaim new and milder emergency measures so as to appease the constitutionalists and kill the opposition of his enemies. He does not anticipate that the Nazis will give him much trouble. He reckons that Hitler has not yet forgotten the election débâcle of November. Besides, his twelve million marks of election debts must lie heavy on his stomach and considerably paralyse the activists. He intends to hang the dissolution of the Reichstag over Hitler's head ; he does not think that Hitler will let things come to that pass. Schleicher intends to employ this means, however, only as a last resort, as, of course, the anticipated losses of the National Socialists would go simply and solely to the credit of the Communists, into whose hands he doesn't exactly want to play.

His strongest trump against the Nazis is Prussia ! He has come to terms with the Centre Party and has got their leaders to agree that they will elect a National Socialist, probably Strasser, as Prime Minister of the Prussian Landtag, where they have a majority along with the Brown Shirts. And if the Prussian Premier is prepared to enter the Reichs Government as a Minister without portfolio, then the Chancellor will recall the Reichs Commissioner for Prussia. But not otherwise. He, Schleicher, reckons that the Nazis will agree to this ; at any rate, Herr Strasser



has already been won for the plan. By these methods he will involve the Brown Shirts indirectly in the Government and harness them to his car.

He has good connections with the trade unions. The Christian Trade Unions go all the way with him, the Social Democratic ones only half the way at present. But both (and that is the main thing!) are prepared to stomach Herr Strasser as Prussian Prime Minister.

For the rest, a general amnesty on every side. Except for the Brown murderers of Potempa. These brutes are to be excluded from his Christmas blessings.

He is going to announce his programme over the radio, not in the Reichstag ; but not until after parliament has risen.

In short, he is very confident. He expects no great difficulties from any side. Not even from the Hugenberg crowd, on whom he can put the screw at any time, and is resolved to do it too, if necessary.

*5th December, 1932.*

The Nazis have declared war on the Government. We shall be able to bear this with composure and not take it too much to heart—for waging a war money is required, Herr Hitler ! And that is what you don't happen to have !

He has made his Reichstag Deputies take the oath to-day. An oath of allegiance to his own almighty person, as in the reign of Wilhelm of blessed memory. He called for "war", but he meant their cheque-books. He's in a confoundedly painful position !

Yesterday's elections in Thuringia : the Nazis

have lost twenty to thirty per cent since the 6th of November—within four weeks ! If Hitler thinks that this strengthens his position against us, he is mistaken. Even although Herr Goebbels in his paper to-day is proclaiming the Thuringia débâcle as an “impressive victory” for the Brown Shirts. May they go on winning in that fashion !

With such “victories” Papa Hindenburg lost the World War in his time !

*6th December, 1932.*

The new Reichstag has met. No one appeared for the Government. General Litzmann,<sup>1</sup> the National Socialist, who was President for the opening day by virtue of seniority, made the obligatory speech. He said nothing about the Reichstag.

Nothing else of consequence happened at the opening of the Reichstag. Or, at most, that the Prussian Government, driven out ignominiously half a year ago, allowed themselves the “revolutionary” daring of sending a representative to sit in the Council.

Papen is intriguing to the utmost of his capacity. Everywhere one stumbles over mines laid by him. He seems unable to get over the fact that his Chancellorship has gone the way of all earthly things. To everybody who will listen to him he

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<sup>1</sup> The Nazi Party was taking no chances of the repetition of a Communist being provisional Reichstag President, as had been the case with Clara Zetkin after the July elections. They had insured the election on their own ticket, both to the Reichstag and to the Prussian Landtag, of old General Litzmann, a veteran of many wars who had last commanded on the Eastern front. He therefore discharged the office of provisional President at the openings of both bodies.

divulges, "in strict confidence", that we, of all people, are responsible. He is firmly convinced that we are also responsible for his folly.

The "Pan-German League" is anxious. It's sending letters to all the world declaring that Schleicher must go, because we're trying to "force democracy again" on the Old Gentleman. Judge Class<sup>1</sup> and his right hand, Hertzberg the provincial magistrate, seem to be incapable of learning anything!

This evening I met Herr Hitler, the would-be dictator, at a stag party at Stauss's.<sup>2</sup> He was visibly depressed, and let all the evening go by without giving one of his usual public addresses. Instead, he spoke about music and Richard Wagner.

He cut me ; I bore it with composure.

No member of the Government was present. A pity, I should have liked to see Hitler's face.

*7th December, 1932.*

Oskar Hindenburg came to see us to-day. Latest revelation : Neurath has been having his say too. He had had secret hopes of the Chancellorship. "With a General as Chancellor we'll have the whole world against us!"

This was the argument, of all things, that he came out with. Hindenburg was brutally rude. He, the President of the Reich, was, after all, a General too, and was respected abroad all the same more than any of his predecessors. (Which I venture to doubt!)

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<sup>1</sup> Chairman of the Pan-German League, an organization founded before the War for the union of the German-speaking peoples of Europe.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. von Stauss, a prominent bank director.

The Reichstag have chosen Goering as their President. The Hugenberg crowd have gone on strike.

Strasser has been here. He is very angry at Hitler, who is irrevocably tied to Goering's leading-strings again, because Goering has promised to get him money from Sweden. Anyhow, Strasser believes that he could split the Nazis and win over half at least of his colleagues in the Reichstag if we would offer the men "something" and pledge ourselves not to dissolve the Reichstag prematurely. Of course, Schleicher could not very well promise that, and Strasser left in dejection. He is firmly persuaded that the National Socialists have passed their zenith ; "if the others don't make too many stupid mistakes, and the Government has the courage to go to the country at the right time, then Hitler will never come into power. The best that can happen to him is to become the fifth wheel of the chariot."

Strasser spoke of Hitler as if he were a half-sick, half-mad operatic soprano ; of Goering and Goebbels he talked in quite a different tone. But the brotherly love of the Brown Shirts is a peculiar affair.

Hitler has told us that he is in agreement with the adjournment of the Reichstag until 10th January. So he seems to have remarked that the tensions within his group have not exactly grown less acute ; all his people naturally want to become something. He intends to scatter his parliamentary party as quickly as possible to the four quarters of the compass, so that they may not be able to talk too much and hatch too many plots here in Berlin.

*8th December, 1932.*

There was a discussion in the Reichstag to-day on a question brought up by the National Socialists : who would act as deputy in the event of Hindenburg's death until a new President was elected ? The Hitler-ites wish the President of the Supreme Court to do so, for which there is, in any case, the precedent of Ebert. Why not ? At any rate, it is better than leaving all the power in the hands of whatever Chancellor may be in office at the time.<sup>1</sup>

The Hohenzollerns are still hopeful of the dawn and are setting mightily to work. Is the Government agreeable that Wilhelm the Second should return to Germany—of course, only for reasons of health ? I urgently advised against it ; but Schleicher is of a different mind and intends to discuss the matter with the Cabinet. What point is there in such experiments ?

The day before yesterday it was Litzmann, to-day it has been the Communists who have made a sharp attack on Hindenburg. And one must say that the Communists have set about the business more skilfully than the Senior President by the grace of Hitler. But, of course, nothing will come of it ; Hindenburg isn't sensitive, and never gets into a real rage.

And to keep one from quite losing one's sense of humour : the Hugenberg crowd have "moved" that they should be given the extreme Right benches in the

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<sup>1</sup> The Nazi proposal was, in fact, adopted and became law in an amendment to the Constitution.

Reichstag and the Nazis requested to shift towards the Centre. They have grave cares, these model patriots !

*9th December, 1932.*

The break between Hitler and Strasser is complete. Strasser has asked for leave and departed, raging, for the south. Feder, too, has refused to act with Hitler any longer, ostensibly because his "department" is about to be done away with. The rats are leaving the sinking ship.

Schleicher considers that the Strasser business may turn out to be a good thing for us. He has the intention of making Strasser, whose stock has gone up distinctly because of his break with Hitler, Reichs Commissioner for Prussia, and offering him a place without a portfolio in the Cabinet. Then he would have at least half of the Nazi faction in his hands, for most of them are speculating now only on fat posts in the Prussian administration and would gladly exchange their "revolutionary" spirit against the sure income (with right to pension !) of a State or District Councillor.

Everything is curiously still in the Oldenburg camp. I would like to know what that lot is hatching now. They certainly aren't sleeping !

The Reichstag, which will adjourn to-morrow, has passed the bill "touching the eventuality of Hindenburg's death". Meissner tells me that the Old Gentleman considers it tactless of people to reckon on his demise. And he's eighty-eight at that !

*10th December, 1932.*

Herr Hitler seems to feel very certain of his followers ! To-day, before he sent them away on leave, he hastily had them sworn again. The second time within a week !

Goering and Kerrl<sup>1</sup> have been to see Schleicher. They wanted to know what the attitude of the Government would be towards an elected Prime Minister of Prussia. Schleicher gave the laconic answer that it depended upon the person of the Prime Minister. Goering wanted to know more ; but Schleicher simply shrugged his shoulders. The two of them took their leave again.

And this evening Herr Kerrl informs the Press that the Prussian Landtag will not undertake the election of the Prime Minister when it meets on 14th December. "For technical reasons !" Another few weeks and these people will be feeding out of our hand. Unless before that they have got money from somewhere to grow insolent upon !

The members of the Reichstag have gone home after passing the Bill of Amnesty. There, too, the Nazis suffered a fearful set-back ; their amendment was rejected, that of the Communists, excluding the Brown murderers from mercy, accepted. And by help of the vote of some of the National Socialists themselves too ! They seem to be scared to death of the future and to be avoiding the limelight.

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<sup>1</sup> A Nazi Deputy and President of the Prussian Landtag after the November elections. Later appointed Prussian Minister of Justice after the Revolution of January 1933.

*11th December, 1932.*

Strasser has been finally dismissed. Hitler has appointed as his successor Robert Ley.<sup>1</sup>

He's the right man for Hitler. They both go well together. Besides, he is in the particular confidence of the chemical manufacturers in the Rhineland.

*12th December, 1932.*

If we have a little more patience the Nazis will have become so well broken that they will take any direction we order them. To-day Goering and Kerl went to see Hindenburg : very devout, very apprehensive. They begged "most humbly" to be informed "whether His Excellency was prepared to tolerate a National Socialist Prime Minister in Prussia".

The Old Gentleman announced his willingness should the Prime Minister be a decent man who would enter the Reichs Cabinet. Long silence ! When he had regained his composure again, Goering tried to adopt a hectoring tone. As the Prime Minister would be provided by the National Socialists, it was "surely" Hitler's indefensible right to nominate him. Hindenburg interrupted him very violently. Herr Hitler was entitled to lay suggestions before him, the President, but nothing more. Whether these suggestions were accepted was his, Hindenburg's, business. Kerl tried to mediate and asked whether Hindenburg would accept Goering, for instance, as Prime Minister. Whereupon the Old Gentleman

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Robert Ley, Nazi Deputy in the Reichstag and Prussian Landtag. Appointed by Hitler as leader of the German Labour Front in 1933.



gave the classic answer that he had not yet sufficiently weighed the question to be able to pronounce upon it. Then Goering took the floor again. Would this solution mean that the National Socialists were also pledged to the Schleicher Cabinet? Hindenburg rose and answered in two words: "Of course!" Curt and frosty leave-taking. So that was that!

Thank God, to-morrow morning I shall be out of this Berlin atmosphere at long last, for a short time. The Saar region and the Pfalz. Military business. I shall listen to Schleicher's programme on my way; the contents are known to me already.

One thing more before I forget. Nadolny reports that the Disarmament Conference recognized yesterday Germany's equal rights.<sup>1</sup> Now he can take part again at Geneva.

*16th December, 1932.*

These few days have been a real refreshment. A different wind about one's [ears for once! On the western frontier everything is in excellent order. And in the Saar, too, things are running smoothly.

On the way back I called on Duisberg.<sup>2</sup> He introduced me to one of his colleagues, a young chemist, both clever and energetic, who gave us a

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the Five-Power Declaration of December 11, 1932, by which a formula was achieved for the return of Germany to the Disarmament Conference. In effect, the formula was completely vague, Germany recognized in principle the right of France to security, while France recognized in principle the right of Germany to equality. It was, however, alleged non-fulfilment of this formula on the part of the other Powers which led Germany to leave the Conference for a second time on October 14, 1933.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Duisberg, Managing Director of the German chemical trust.



OSKAR VON BENECKENDORFF UND VON HINDENBURG  
Personal Adjutant to the President of the Reich.



long lecture on the possibilities and prospects of a bacteriological war ; he is the head of this department with the I. G. dye industry. He is convinced that our resources are now so far advanced and so perfect that, in case of need, we could risk the great throw. Of the material there is plenty available, and the effects are prompt and absolutely sure. At first I was somewhat sceptical ; for we could only adopt such a course if we had a hundred to one chance of winning. Otherwise we should be done for in the eyes of the whole world and for all time. One thing is clear : that, compared to the next war, the World War will seem child's play—almost a honeymoon !

Schleicher's speech yesterday was very fine. "Without sticking to a programme we must do whatever is most reasonable in the circumstances," that is what is required. Nevertheless, the Press, of course, has all sorts of criticisms to make. We shall not take it tragically.

To-day I ran across Papen again for the first time since his fall. He was friendliness itself and played the grand seigneur. His authority in the Herren Club at least hasn't suffered. Rather the opposite. He gave us a long harangue on the necessity for German-French collaboration. His father-in-law in the Saar seems to be having business worries : that is probably the reason for Papen's zeal.

Strasser writes that Hitler has twelve million marks of debts and is almost in despair because he can see no way out. The money Goering promised has not come to hand. Strasser considers that we should put on the screw.

*17th December, 1932.*

Eight days ago Kube wrote in the Press that it was "almost an æsthetic pleasure to treat politically with Schleicher". And to-day he got on his hind legs in the Prussian Landtag and abused the Chancellor, calling him this "quite obscure Major in the World War". Of course, his brethren of the Brown Shirts applauded him wildly. The whole mob are as unscrupulous as they make them ; and this pack expect Germany to be delivered into their hands ? Out of the question ! That would be the final end.

Unconscious humour has not died out among us yet. The National Socialist Party Press had got ready a "Strasser Book" for Christmas, in which Strasser was lauded as "the pattern of eternal fidelity". Now they have been compelled to withdraw the existing 80,000 copies of the trash again, since Strasser's "eternal fidelity" has meanwhile become a thing of the past. Painful, very painful !

*18th December, 1932.*

Herr Hitler has made a great speech at Halle. He has grown small and pitiable, and prays for better times. He must wait, he says. And grow still more small and pitiable ! That's your line, Herr Hitler !

Schleicher has requested Hindenburg to pardon an English officer who was sentenced for espionage. But the Old Gentleman refused to do anything in the matter at this stage. The "perfidious" English must

be shown that nobody can sin against Germany without being punished for it.

The scandal surrounding the East German Relief Fund is growing greater and greater. That is a sharp weapon with which something could be done. All these feudal families are involved in the mess.

There's only one thing that surprises me—that these people are remaining so quiet. They surely know that we aren't inactive!

*19th December, 1932.*

Goering and Kerl aren't relaxing their efforts. They are resolved to get their fingers into the flesh-pots of Prussia at any cost. To-day they requested an interview with Schleicher. Schleicher, of course, received them at once. The results of the interview were negative, however.

Schleicher told the pair of them quite calmly that he would only remove the Reichs Commissioner in Prussia if the National Socialist Party pledged itself "unconditionally" to put no difficulties in the way of the present Government of the Reich. For that, it was essential that the new Prime Minister of Prussia should enter the Cabinet as a Minister without portfolio, and that the Nazis should make known, "without any subterfuge", their confidence in the Government thus enlarged. The two gentlemen took their leave in the most courteous terms; they said they would talk with Hitler and let the Chancellor know "the decision of the chief of their party" in due course.

To-day we have had reports from various places

that a savage campaign against Schleicher has begun. Herr von "P" has got hold of the addresses of all officers who are remotely connected with the large land-proprietors by blood or marriage, and is bombarding these people with "memoranda", in which he adduces "proof" that "we" are contemplating a policy of "Agrarian Bolshevism". He is carrying out this campaign quite openly, and does not even scruple to set his name to it.

We will let him vent his rage until he has it out. Now, just before the Christmas holidays, there isn't much point in laying counter-mines. But wait till January comes ! Then we'll let you see, Herr von "p".

It's cheering, too, to see how faithfully and promptly our officers have handed these circulars over to us. In spite of everything, there's still discipline among our people !

*20th December, 1932.*

The President has consented, after all, to sign the pardon of the English captain, after having striven long enough against committing that chivalrous act. Schleicher was forced to speak to him four or five times on account of this harmless, and, as far as we are concerned, cheap act of magnanimity. That's how one has to waste one's time !

For the rest, a holiday spirit reigns. The amnesty has been passed by the Reichs Council, but the scoundrels of Potempa, Hitler's "comrades", will remain in gaol. I don't grudge him this set-back.

"P" is hounding us down worse then ever.

Proper behaviour for a true Christian at Christmas time ! And we're gathering ammunition against the East German Relief Fund scandal. Another pious occupation !

I'm off to-morrow morning. It's to be hoped there are more reasonable people at St. Moritz than in this fine city. And after the New Year the dance will start again !

*3rd January, 1933.*

One can't even have one's holiday in peace. Schleicher sent a telegram ordering me to be back on duty to-day. And it was lovely in the Engadine too ; no Nazi to be seen far and wide. At any rate, none in that conspicuous brown convict uniform !

There's the very devil to pay here ! Papen and Co. are waging their poison-gas war against us with desperate fury. The charges that they are showering on us in their rage are past description.

I have urgently advised Schleicher to demand categorically from Hindenburg that he shall publicly take a stand against this unexampled campaign of vilification. But, unfortunately, Schleicher cannot yet make up his mind to it ; civil courage, the absence of which he has always been able to censure so eloquently in others, is something he does not possess himself. He fears he might lose his influence with the old man by taking the offensive, and he will not see that his vacillation actually encourages the others to undermine him, slowly but surely, and send him the way that the Socialists went before him.



I know that it isn't exactly a pleasure to fight that clique on their own level. But some time or other the matter must be faced and the Gordian knot cut. This accursed passivity is ruining us ! And no fight has ever been won by sticking one's head in the sand. Schleicher should know that too ! But no ! He simply won't see it.

It must surely begin to dawn on Hindenburg at long last, however. The scandal stinks to the very heavens. Shortly before Christmas a circular was sent to all and sundry asking people in the most shameless fashion, and in a tone very humiliating for the President, to contribute money to put the bankrupt estate of Neudeck on its feet again. Round about 450,000 Reichs marks was required, and it was intended to present that sum to the President as a New Year's gift !

A poor officer who comes into a landed estate in his old days and can't get over it is a damned painful spectacle. If the Poles were to come to-morrow and take East Prussia away from that clique, I wouldn't lift a finger to prevent them ; I'd go and get drunk out of sheer delight. Until something of the kind happens—I'm convinced of that—we'll have no peace.

Otherwise our position is really not too bad. The financial collapse of the Nazis is slowly assuming grotesque forms ; whole companies of the Storm Troops are mutinying because they are no longer being paid enough for their political "convictions". And round Gregor Strasser there is gathering daily a growing band of malcontents, who consider that they

have waited long enough and now want to get some return.

I have been conferring with Schleicher for hours. I have got him to the point of being resolved to take this one bull by the horns, at least. It's to be hoped that he will stick to his "courageous" decision. He intends to extort an explicit declaration, so that this accursed uncertainty may finally cease.

He will demand from Hindenburg that Strasser be appointed as Vice-Chancellor and Reichs Commissioner of Prussia. That must naturally happen before the forthcoming election in Lippe, so that the Nazis should get a double dose. And on the day after the poll we shall dissolve the Prussian Landtag and have the Brown Shirts on the hip there too. Then they'll be amenable, and Hindenburg will be in a dilemma !

I consider, further, that he should attempt to come to an understanding in some way with Otto Braun. But Schleicher will not hear of that ; he thinks that nothing of any use can be done with that feeble lot. He would rather try what can be done with the trade unions and the Reichs Banner League. That is a possibility, too, which must in any case be sounded. To-morrow Schleicher is going to see the old man ; I hope something comes of it.

A ray of light. The Moselle Canal, from the French frontier to Cologne, is to be constructed. An old project of our hatching ; both from the military and economic point of view an excellent business. The cost will be round about sixty million marks.

*4th January, 1933.*

Schleicher came back in deep depression from his interview with the President. The Old Gentleman will have nothing to do with our proposal for the appointment of Strasser ; Papen had urgently warned him against it. In the first place, Strasser stood quite by himself and had no longer any influence in the Nazi Party ; and in the second, Hitler was resolved to bring about a Presidential crisis if necessary over this matter.

Schleicher responded that, in that case, now was the hour for ruthless action. Hitler must be arrested, his party dissolved and outlawed, the whole scandal of the Nazis' revenues brought to light, their connections with the armament industry abroad made public. For this fight he, the Chancellor, would need the backing of the German people, and he could gain that by carrying through his land-settlement programme with all possible speed. Then he would have the Centre, the trade unions of every colour, and the Reichs Banner League behind him.

When Hindenburg, who had hitherto been listening to Schleicher's proposals with increasing interest, heard the words "land settlement", all his sympathy vanished. The Chancellor's plan could not be carried out "in that way". He, the President of the Reich, could not take the responsibility before God of touching the rights of big landed property.

General Schleicher then recalled Hindenburg's own well-known "Land-Settlement Manifesto", issued during the World War. But the Old Gentleman

would hear no more of it ; he had "since" become convinced that "the idea, though beautiful in itself, was incapable of being carried out".

On hearing these comfortless words Schleicher fell silent. And Hindenburg took a high tone and declared that, quite unlike his Chancellor, he was not at all of the opinion that the National Socialists should be swept away. There was, of course, much that was discreditable in the movement, and Herr Hitler made the worst possible impression upon him. But that could not do away with the fact that there was also valuable fighting material to be found in the party ; one shouldn't offend these men, but rather do one's utmost to win them over, and with their help build up a new Prussian Army. He, Schleicher, should realize that as General and as Chancellor he could have no conceivably higher task than to lay the foundations of that Army. All the other questions that usually played a part in politics were of a secondary kind. Questions which would solve themselves without difficulty once we had "won the war of deliverance".

When Schleicher responded to this that he could not look upon his duties in such a narrow light, Hindenburg brusquely broke off the discussion. "I have given you your orders. I expect even the Chancellor of the Reich to act in accordance with them !" So this is the much-lauded "authoritative" policy of a "Presidential" Cabinet ! The whole world will laugh at us. And we haven't the right even to be surprised if it does !

The decree for regulating the sale of margarine

has gone through after all. Schleicher fought against it tooth and nail ; but the Agrarians, who want to get a higher price for their butter, have gingered up the Old Gentleman. The Squire of Neudeck who, evil tongues maintain, intends to throw himself next into the butter business as well, issued his commands ; and the Chancellor clicked his heels and obeyed. But who will actually have to bear the responsibility ? The President who, according to the Constitution, is not responsible to anybody, or the Reichs Chancellor ? I simply can't understand Schleicher's swallowing all this !

*5th January, 1933.*

The two noble and sensitive souls have come together ! Certainly not out of pure love for each other (I don't believe that Papen is one of "those"), but far more out of sheer hatred against us, because we have obstructed both of them.

It was at the house of a Jewish bank and stock-exchange king (of all things), that of Baron Schroeder in Cologne, that the feat of reconciliation between Hitler and Papen took place. The lives of "great spirits" leave room, it seems, for some queer aberrations.

What did they discuss together ? That I don't know. One thing, however, is certain ; that they made an alliance against us. As Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach<sup>1</sup> has informed us by telephone, Thyssen

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<sup>1</sup> Chairman of the Directorial Board of Krupp's Works and of the Federation of German Industries.

and Springorum<sup>1</sup> too have their fingers in the pie, and in the event of an agreement between Papen and Hitler, hold out the promise of furnishing the Nazis with the needful funds. And obviously, also, the needful funds to prosecute the campaign against us "in style".

The hostile ring round Schleicher is gradually closing in. And the Chancellor hesitates and hesitates, and cannot make up his mind to leap clear.

By this piece of comedy Hitler and Papen have obviously checkmated our plans with Strasser, and the chances of a Hitler Chancellorship have improved considerably. But we could still make Strasser Reichs Commissioner for the Voluntary Service Associations ! We could win over even the Old Gentleman himself for that without much trouble ; he knows quite well that, in effect, these Voluntary Service Associations are simply the future militia under another name.

But, of course, Schleicher is not yet clear about what he should do. If he hesitates much longer he won't need to do anything at all, and the others will relieve him of the task.

To-day Roehm was here again. He has had enough, and wants to come over to us. That is, he wanted to come to us, for when he was here he was still unaware of the great reconciliation scene in Cologne. I presume that by now he will have changed his mind, our stock having fallen and Hitler's risen.

The Reichstag will not meet until the 24th of January. Our State Secretary, Planck, has announced to the Senior Council that we, of course, will be

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<sup>1</sup> A steel magnate of the Ruhr.

present. The Nazis were quite docile ; obviously they wish to gain time and prevent the dissolution of parliament at all costs.

"P's" private war against Schleicher is going on merrily. Unfortunately, the General is still hesitating to publish the compromising material which would strip all his opponents of their last shred of reputation. He's simply going to twiddle his thumbs until something happens—the "strong man" !

6th January, 1933.

Schleicher was again with Hindenburg to-day. An extremely ungracious reception : "Do you realize what your policy is leading to ? In Leipzig the Social Democrats have joined forces with the Communists and elected a Red Council ! This foolery must stop, and at once !"

The Old Gentleman "honestly welcomed" the fact that Papen and Hitler had come to an understanding. He seemed to have no feeling for the painful aspects of the affair. General Schleicher laid before him an article which appeared to-day in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, in which it is asserted that the initiative for the Cologne meeting came from Herr von Papen, the "particular confidant of the President of the Reich", and that "it is quite natural that Papen should be desirous of learning more particularly how one (that is, Schleicher) becomes Chancellor nowadays".

Schleicher protested against the scandalous innuendo concealed in these words, and asked the President for a declaration of solidarity, which he,

the Chancellor, would hand to the Press. Before the Old Gentleman could reply, Oskar Hindenburg interrupted with the warning that they should not push things to extremes and snap the slender threads of negotiation. The Old Gentleman agreed with this view, rejected Schleicher's proposal, and observed that the Chancellor surely knew that he, the President, would "always" stand by him as a faithful comrade.

The "faithfulness" of Hindenburg? A strange combination of ideas!

That Schleicher could profess to be satisfied with such a sentiment is beyond my comprehension. He surely must see that he is being more and more hard pressed every day. He will not strengthen his position by avoiding the battle; for while he hesitates, his enemies are arming. And the decision must finally come.

I keep on goading him to take the offensive, because I can see his opponents advancing. But he only waits. For what? That, I think, he doesn't know himself. One has only to cast a single glance at the evening papers to see clearly enough what the game is. Just one example. Herr Schacht has been making a speech to the Steel Syndicate asserting that Schleicher's plans are Bolshevistic; the "new policy" begins with land settlement, but will end automatically in the control of industry. It must be opposed with resolution from the very start. Herr Schacht has the face to produce this kind of stuff; and Herr Silverberg<sup>1</sup> ostentatiously signifies his applause—Herr Silverberg, by whom, until now, Schleicher could have sworn!

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<sup>1</sup> An industrial magnate in Western Germany.



As was only to be expected, Hitler has now grown insolent again. He has money in his pocket and bawls with proportionate loudness ; and is resolved to be Chancellor—that goes without saying. He or nobody ! Stülpnagel is his choice for War Minister. Not the Stülpnagel of the *Börsenzeitung*, but the one who runs the Kuratorium. It is almost criminally stupid to make such a proposal ; for if Stülpnagel is appointed as Minister for War, then any child can see where all this business of athletic sports is intended to lead. Fine “diplomatists” !

7th January, 1933.

Schleicher was again with the old man late last night, complaining about the savage campaign that the Nazis are waging against his Government, sabotaging all his work. If Hindenburg, as he had said in the middle of the day, believed in the possibility of a *rapprochement* between Schleicher and Hitler, then that process must not be ruined by demagogues like Goebbels and Goering. He, Schleicher, wished, therefore, to proclaim a state of martial law, to come into force at once and to make all assembly unlawful ; this state to last until the opening day of parliament.

Hindenburg turned the proposal down with contumely ; one could not perpetually rule by prohibitions. Besides, he would like to know what the Government intended to do to render impossible for all time the attacks of the Left Wing and the Centre Parties on landed property. When Schleicher, as was his duty, pointed out to him that no constitutional objection could be raised against the exposures of the obvious

abuses connected with the East German Relief Fund, since the Reichstag had itself appointed a special commission to deal with the question, and the result of that commission's findings might be published at any time, Hindenburg flew into a rage and replied that he expected to have laid before him within twenty-four hours an emergency measure that would effectively put an end to this mischievous nonsense.

Schleicher must, as he told me, have declined this request in very decided tones. At any rate, the two "comrades" parted in no very cordial spirit. But the Chancellor has still not had enough, it seems. I should like to know how much more he intends to put up with before he retaliates.

Franz von Papen is touching. He informs us that he would like to give the Chancellor a report of his meeting with Hitler. He intends to pay us a visit in the beginning of next week, and, as he puts it so beautifully in his letter, "dispel all the misunderstandings which have insinuated themselves between us".

Regarding the emergency measure "for the prevention of the exposure of feudal corruption", Schleicher has written a letter to the Old Gentleman in which he declares that to promulgate such a law is a simple constitutional impossibility. He must, therefore, decline to draw it up.

Two hours later he had received his answer. Herr Meissner wrote, "on the particular instructions" of the President, that Hindenburg had now convinced himself that the business interests of the country could not stand the strain of a new election. He

accordingly requested the Chancellor to frame his policy in such a way as to avoid a dissolution of the Reichstag ; he, Hindenburg, was not in a position to grant the Chancellor plenary powers to dissolve it.

That is the Old Gentleman's revenge ! Because we have no wish to land ourselves in prison for the sake of his friends ! If he wishes to "rule" in this fashion, then he'll have to find other creatures to do his bidding.

Schleicher is utterly confounded. He had not considered this possible. If he would only draw the consequences ! I keep hammering at him.

Hugenberg, too, seems gradually to be shifting his ground. Everybody is raving about mysterious plans for land settlement, far more comprehensive than Schleicher ever had any intention of carrying out. Unfortunately !

*8th January, 1933.*

To-day, Epiphany Sunday, Oskar Hindenburg appeared in the Ministry and told us, from his father, that the latter has received a letter from Hitler containing the following broad hint :

If he, Hitler, were to become Chancellor, he would pledge himself "to prohibit public discussion of questions concerning the East Relief Fund, if necessary, by the employment of force". And all, of course, as Hitler added in explanation, "out of national considerations, and for the purpose of maintaining and securing a strong large-scale farming industry".

I must frankly say that this business has made a



WERNER  
Chief Prosecutor for the Reich



more than painful impression upon me. I can't understand Hindenburg's consenting to have anything to do with such things. Schleicher is of the same opinion. He sent word to the President that Hitler's statement was "not of a nature" to shake him from his well-considered position. If Hindenburg, however, believed that he would do better with Hitler as Chancellor, then he, Schleicher, was ready to resign office that very day. But in that case he must reserve the right for himself of informing the public what had prompted him to such a step.

Count Kalkreuth, the President of the German Land League, has to-day launched a savage attack on us at Frankfort ; nor has he spared Warmbold and Braun. The policy that Schleicher was pursuing was a Marxist one. The farmers had used up their last reserves. In the spring of 1934, at latest, they would be faced with total bankruptcy if "something decisive" was not done. The campaign against "alleged" irregularities in the administration of the East Relief Fund was nothing but lies and fabrications ; besides, everybody knew that the present fund was only a drop in the ocean, and must be at once replaced by a "methodically planned system of laws for the protection of agriculture".

I should like to know just one thing : what on earth could one fling into the maws of these people to satiate them finally ? Money can't do it any longer ; there isn't enough in the whole world to appease these people.

In November 1918 the opportunity for dealing with them was there. But our friends, the Social

Democrats, were afraid of their own boldness, and in their "statesmanlike wisdom" they "republicized" the feudal Junkers of East Prussia. In other words, they left everything as it had been before.

Papen is speaking somewhere to-day to the Steel Helmets. So this union too has been happily consummated. All these moves, of course, are dictated by the same thing.

*9th January, 1933.*

Papen was with Schleicher to-day. Consummately friendly, as if nothing had happened.

All the statements spread abroad by certain newspapers that he, Papen, had been intriguing against the Chancellor were filthy lies from beginning to end. Of course, nobody had expected them to issue anything else. Papen saw his task simply as that of "bringing over" the National Socialists to Schleicher and Hindenburg, and winning Herr Hitler for a Cabinet of "national concentration". He, Papen, knew, of course, the weaknesses of that party —weaknesses which resided partly in the personality of Herr Hitler himself, partly in an extremely "confused programme", but there was also much good to be found in it.

Papen completely shared Schleicher's view that one could not well make Herr Hitler Chancellor, and that at least very sharp precautions must be taken if it should be eventually decided after all to risk such a leap in the dark. But simply to brush the National Socialist Party aside was impossible. By a new election one could weaken the fellows, true. Hitler's

losses, however, would benefit not Hugenberg, but simply and solely the Communists, whereby the danger from the Left would become still greater than it was already.

"For that reason" he, Papen, had advised the President to avoid another dissolution "considering the economic situation".

Papen had tried in vain to get a binding statement from Hitler. Hitler refused to make any decision before the results of the poll in Lippe (a constituency with 140,000 electors!) He counted on a considerable gain for the National Socialist Party.

And, finally, the East Relief Fund scandal had caused Herr Papen great anxiety. Could Schleicher see no possible way at all of combating these "so-called" revelations? The President's entourage and Herr von Hindenburg himself were most disagreeably affected by these daily increasing attacks on men whose "historic service to the Fatherland" was incontrovertible. It surely could not be unknown to the Chancellor that strong forces were at present mobilizing with the purpose of making his position impossible. And there was no doubt but that this "subterranean" war which was being waged against Schleicher by intimate friends of Hindenburg must, in the end, bring about quite automatically an estrangement between the President and the Chancellor. In such a situation it would be a wise move for Schleicher to take the bull by the horns, prohibit the campaign of scandal and disband the parliamentary commission of enquiry. By such means Schleicher could win back at one stroke the "confidence" of the Field-Marshal,



and gain the eternal gratitude of the Hindenburg family. Compared with such a result it did not greatly matter if certain strands of the "so-called" Constitution were warped or, if need be, torn.

Papen is not at all a bad actor ! How frankly and plausibly he brought out all this ! And yet at the same time every sentence was a snare for Schleicher. Even if we should take part in this business, Schleicher would be sent flying. The East Prussians wish to have nothing more to do with him. The only question now is whether Schleicher is strong enough to crush the rascals and build up a new régime based on the Army and the trade unions. That is the problem, and only that. All the rest is eyewash.

After he left us, Papen went straight to the Old Gentleman. What was his business there ? I don't know. And Schleicher doesn't, either.

*10th January, 1933.*

The Press refuses to let us hear the end of the interview between us and Papen. We have given out a mildly worded explanation. Of course, nobody believes us !

*11th January, 1933.*

Oberföhren, whom I met to-day, informs me that Hugenberg and Hitler got together during the election fight in Lippe and came to a comprehensive understanding. This union is directed against Schleicher, of course. Oberföhren says that he warned his chief ; but Hugenberg is of the opinion that Hitler can safely become Chancellor as long as he, Hugenberg,

is at hand to restrain him, and as long as he himself has the economic ministries in his control. I fear (and Oberföhring too thinks the same) that Hugenberg will undertake a great deal more than he can manage if he contracts this alliance. Well, it hasn't come to that yet! And Hitler has still his whippers-in to reckon with.

Several English newspapers have brought out accounts of our secret arming. This is highly inconvenient, and the English are extremely well informed. I would just like to know who is the traitor in our camp; he can't be in a subordinate position, he knows too many details for that. Hindenburg "requires" us to make an energetic search for the offender; he has made the affair an excuse for a few rude remarks. But that doesn't hurt us; he had to find some vent for his rage with us.

Herr Hitler has unexpectedly arrived in Berlin and pitched his tent in the Kaiserhof Hotel. The place is swarming like an ant-heap; only more luxurious. The Duke of Coburg,<sup>1</sup> who is just back from England, has been there; he was invited to the Old Gentleman's palace yesterday evening, and is said to have played the rôle of interpreter.

To supply an urgent want, the so-called State Party has been "revived" to-day. Does Herr Dietrich<sup>2</sup> seriously believe that he can win a single adherent now for his dryasdust Liberalism?

With Schleicher there's nothing to be done.

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<sup>1</sup> A grandson of the Duke of Edinburgh and great-grandson of Queen Victoria.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Hermann Dietrich, Chairman of the German *Staatspartei* and Minister of Finance in Brüning's Cabinet.

He's still "waiting". And when one asks him what he is waiting for one can get no reply. Meanwhile, the ring round us is growing narrower and narrower. The whole business reminds one damnably of the state of things in Prussia last July. Only the names have changed. Then it was Braun and Severing, to-day it is Schleicher.

*12th January, 1933.*

A crying scandal! To-day Hindenburg received the leaders of the German Land League, in the presence of Schleicher and the Minister for Agriculture. These gentlemen were very polite and very tractable, and Count Kalkreuth's recent and savage attacks on Schleicher seemed forgotten. Hindenburg promised to do everything "to rouse agriculture to new life", and Count Kalkreuth expressed his thanks to the "Herr Field-Marshal and his coadjutors". He had never doubted, etc.

Followed a feudal banquet, to demonstrate the peculiar destitution of the Agrarians. Schleicher sat next to Count Kalkreuth and was treated by him with the most warm cordiality. In the middle of the feast a newspaper was handed to the Chancellor, in which appeared the German Land League's summons to war. A continuous and savage attack on the Chancellor, whose lies reached a climax in the sentence: "The plundering of agriculture to fill the almighty money-bags of the internationally controlled export industry has never reached such lengths even under Marxian Governments as it has under the sway of Herr General von Schleicher." Schleicher silently

handed the newspaper to Count Kalkreuth, pointed to this passage, and requested an explanation. And Kalkreuth merely smiled and nodded. That was his only reply.

Whereupon Schleicher rose and, without a word, left the room. I and the rest of our people followed him. That was a matter of course.

To-morrow he will demand from Hindenburg that he shall stop the mouths of these venomous pamphleteers. I must frankly confess that I had not thought even these gentry capable of such despicable conduct.

Another disturbing report. Hitler has received more money, and a great sum too. And has grown proportionately arrogant. His election speeches in Lippe are incomparable; demagogy on this scale exists nowhere else in the world nowadays. We couldn't win even a consolation prize with our Strasser plan now; through Schleicher's accursed vacillation we have thoroughly missed the connection.

*13th January, 1933.*

The German Land League has launched a second polemic. Thanks are expressed to the Old Gentleman for having at last filled agriculture with "new hope"; but in the same pamphlet they fulminate against Schleicher who still continues unaltered his "fateful policy against agriculture", and makes speeches on the radio instead of working, and has now, "on the most threadbare excuse, broken with the German Land League, so as to wash his hands of responsibility".

I must really say that nobody can beat these

people. And it is cheering that everybody I have spoken to about Kalkreuth is of our opinion.

Only one man is of a different opinion—the Squire of Neudeck. Schleicher has been with him and demanded that he should dissociate himself from the swindle and send Count Kalkreuth a letter saying so, and telling him that he would not have received him if he had known about the pamphlet.

Hindenburg declined! And when Schleicher requested him at least to protect him, the Chancellor, against the falsehoods of the German Land League, the Field-Marshal merely shrugged his shoulders. "One can't afford to be so sensitive"!

Schleicher returned quite broken down. He simply can't grasp it.

A ray of light. The scandal of the East Relief Fund mounts and mounts. Mad stories! One man declares himself bankrupt four times, and is put on his feet four times; the fifth time, the property is put up to auction, and his ten-year-old daughter buys it for a song. And the creditors are left sitting and can whistle for their money. Another goes bankrupt, gets his dole from the Fund, buys a luxurious motor-car with it, drives down to the Riviera, blows the lot, returns without a penny, and is put on his feet again. All with the State's money. And such and similar cases there are in dozens!

The whole of our fine Germany is one huge bog of corruption, a club for fraudulent bankrupts.

Yesterday Schleicher had a consultation with Kaas, Hugenberg, and Dingeldey.<sup>1</sup> He told the party

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<sup>1</sup> Chairman of the German People's Party.

leaders clearly and explicitly that he did not wish the Reichstag to be adjourned, but that if need be he would force a decision.

Leipart, too, was there. Schleicher put the question to him whether he would make common cause with the Government if he, the Chancellor, broke off his connections with the Right Wing. Leipart asked, "And what about Hitler?" Whereupon Schleicher replied, "That would also mean, of course, a complete break with Hitler."

Leipart intends to think the matter over. So no decision there, either. Everybody "waits". And for what, in Heaven's name?

*14th January, 1933.*

We are being slowly but surely pushed out. The whole Right Wing Press is maliciously elated over the German Land League's attacks on Schleicher. The Nazis are surpassing everybody else in their lies. And Grandpapa Hindenburg plays with his grandchildren and has himself photographed.

Schleicher? He's still hesitating. He isn't even preparing for defence as he should. And yet we have been given a fresh opportunity.

The Association of German Industry has launched a violent proclamation against Kalkreuth and the wire-pullers of the German Land League, the Chamber of Commerce are bombarding us and the President with telegrams of protest and praising Schleicher to the very sky. Schleicher is elated by this and feels grateful. But he does nothing; he has grown humble!

To-day a delegate of Höltermann's was with us. We put the question to him whether the Reichs Banner was prepared to stand by us if we declared war on Hitler and Hugenberg. The reply was clever, cruel, and justified: "By all means, if you can convince us that you mean it in earnest and will not shrink back at the first sign of difficulty."

The race is not yet lost. If Schleicher would only rouse himself!

To-morrow, at the anniversary celebration of the foundation of the Republic, he intends to make a great speech to the Kyffhäuser League. Hindenburg will be there too. I feel as tense as a bow.

*15th January, 1933.*

In the early hours of the morning I received a telephone call from my friend "St——", whom I have not seen since October. He was angry with me about our proceedings against the Communists. And he had attached no importance either to Schleicher's appointment to the Chancellorship, because, he said, he considered us as good as dead.

He urgently asked for a talk with me to-day. He had just returned from the country, and had read in the papers that Schleicher was to speak at a great demonstration on political and military questions. I invited him to lunch with the Chancellor and myself.

In a few sentences he told us his reading of the position. The picture he drew was not hopeful, but I fear it is true. At any rate, he is convinced that in a very short time Schleicher will come to grief over the

East Relief Fund, and disappear unwept and unsung.

The Chancellor tried to force a smile of resignation, and confessed, with a frankness that surprised me, that he saw the same fate awaiting him, but without even being able to imagine any way out. Schleicher was passionately interrupted by my friend.

"If you go on being passive, and let yourself be driven, then certainly there's no way out of the cul-de-sac. But if you could bring yourself to the point of sacrificing the large landed interests, and everything connected with them, as cold-bloodedly as Hindenburg is prepared to sacrifice you, then you will be the coming man. That would naturally mean, too, taking action against the Steel Helmets, and, above all, against Hugenberg and the Nazis. But if you play your cards well, then you're certain of the support of the workmen and the small farmers. The question, of course, is whether you can reckon with certainty on the Reichswehr."

And in order to underline once more the essential importance of this aspect of the problem, he added : "Will the Reichswehr march behind you, and side by side with the workers, even against Hindenburg and against the Constitution ?"

Schleicher surprised me. Although what he had to listen to weren't exactly friendly remarks, and although the proposals made were beyond doubt in violation of so-called legal propriety, he was visibly moved, and his eyes regained that animation which I have missed in them for such a long time. Certainly, said the Chancellor, after a few minutes' reflection, he could count on the Reichswehr, even if Hindenburg,



whose authority was quite destroyed, were to oppose him. The decisive question for him was simply this : Could he rely on the Left Wing ? Here he must have guarantees.

"St——" replied with a smile that Schleicher could not very well ask nor expect the Left Wing to trust him absolutely in advance ; for, unfortunately, there was no getting away from the fact that in the past, and even up to the present moment, he had not shown a particularly happy touch with them, and had often played a game which was anything in the world but frank and above-board. It was for the Chancellor to produce proof of the change in his views and political aims. If these proofs should turn out to be convincing, and it could be seen that his will and his power were behind them, then all might yet be won. To-day, since Schleicher would be speaking to all the radio stations in Germany as well as to the demonstration of the Kyffhäuser League,<sup>1</sup> he would have an excellent opportunity, perhaps the last one he would be given, to burn the necessary boats, or at least to prepare the public for it. He should keep the fact in mind that his real hearers would not be the few thousand ex-officers in the hall, but millions of people in the country sitting listening to their wireless sets. He should speak to them. And if he intended business he must be clear and explicit, and could not afford to pay the slightest regard to the fact of Hindenburg's presence.

Schleicher replied without hesitation that he was prepared to advocate and defend in his speech the

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<sup>1</sup> *Der Deutscher Reichskriegerbund "Kyffhäuser"*, an organization of war veterans, a patriotic and nationalistic body.

ideas which he understood to represent the programme of the "new" Left Wing. But he could not possibly deliver a fighting speech against the East Prussian landed gentry and advocate a radical land-settlement programme to such an audience. It would end irretrievably in an enormous public row.

"St——" got up. "If it comes to a row to-day, all the better ! But if you are afraid of the row then there's nothing more to be said. And you are past all help. Without a row, as you call it, there's nothing that can be done. At worst, it can only hasten the hour of your fall !"

Schleicher, too, got up. After quite a long pause he shook hands with "St——" He would go to his room and think the matter over, he said. He had still two hours before his speech came on. And he was grateful.

"St——" took his leave coolly, very coolly. Then Schleicher went too. And no doubt existed for me that at best the Chancellor would put up a half-and-half show, and that we were out of the running. Which is exactly what has happened.

Certainly, he said several things that must have sounded strangely in the ears of the Old Gentleman and his bodyguard. He advocated an out-and-out militia policy. But he did not take the great hurdle ; he only balked at it.

The Landtag elections in Lippe have brought no surprises. In comparison with the November ones, Hitler has been able to capture three per cent from the Hugenberg crowd ; but he still lags considerably behind his success of July. That will not prevent him,

however, from becoming yet more impudent and arrogant.

Hugenberg was received by the President to-day. He has managed in the most masterly way to use the East Relief Fund as a means to insinuate himself into Hindenburg's good graces. "The fellow is by no means so bad or so wrong-headed as you have always said," Hindenburg remarked to Schleicher and Meissner after Hugenberg had gone.

Count Kalkreuth has made a scandalous speech in Meissen to-day. One continuous attack on Schleicher, whom he is resolved to estrange from Hindenburg at any price.

*18th January, 1933.*

Our friends, the Nazis, are terribly retiring just now. Our Strasser plan, apparently, is still a confounded irritant to their sensitive nerves ; Goering has written Schleicher a touching letter warning him against Strasser. Strasser, he says, had always been the most violent of all against the General, and had once declared at a conference of the leaders of the National Socialist Party that Chancellor von Schleicher was "the most incapable statesman in Germany". Herr Goering offered to produce witnesses against Strasser.

What is one to think of these people ? They belong to the chapter of Nazi comradeship and brotherly love. And this pack claim the right to lead our people !

Incidentally, the case of Strasser is settled, of course. Not on account of Goering's revelations,

however, but because of the election results in Lippe.

Otherwise nothing has changed here during my two days' absence. The Chancellor is still "waiting" ! And the Oldenburg clique are keeping the pot tirelessly boiling. But Hindenburg is playing a pitiable rôle.

*19th January, 1933.*

The hope that we might get out of this fatal cul-de-sac by normal means, and even secure some support from the Right, is finally buried now that Hitler and Hugenberg have united against us. The new "Harzburg Front" <sup>1</sup> But this time under the protection of the Field-Marshal !

Papen has exploited this situation to suggest to Schleicher that he should voluntarily vacate office in order to make place for a Government of National Concentration. Under whose Chancellorship ? In any case, not under that of General Schleicher. Papen very prudently refrained from answering that question. And Schleicher, instead of showing his teeth to the intriguer and busybody, maintained a polite silence ! Where is all this to end ?

I have urgently implored him to attempt at least an alliance with the Left. He may, of course, be disappointed there, since he no longer counts as the strong man he was once considered to be, and his

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<sup>1</sup> The "Harzburg Front" was formed by the Nationalist Parties against Brüning in October 1931, and consisted of an alliance between Hitler and the Nazis ; Hugenberg and the Nationalists ; Seldte and the Stahlhelm ; Dr. Schacht and General von Seeckt.

nimbus has been quite frittered away. All the same, the risk must be taken.

The Centre Party with its "statesman", Brüning, is making a miserable show. These people change their "orientation" three times a day at least. And are surprised that nobody takes them seriously any longer !

*20th January, 1933.*

Schleicher has had another violent scene with Hindenburg, who sent a sudden summons for him, couched in extremely rude terms. He, the President, had learned that the Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry was resolved to "ruin" the East Relief Fund. A proposal had been put forward which would practically exclude the large estates from the benefits of the Fund ; and there was no doubt that it would be carried by a large majority. This proposal forbade the Government to pay out State money to landed estates of over 250 hectares, if these estates did not give up a specified proportion of their area for small holdings. As no estate owner who still had a spark of honour and responsibility would consent to this scandalous condition, this proposal meant the final ruin of the landed gentry.

And then : "What do you intend, Herr Chancellor, to do against this criminal Bolshevism ? What means have you prepared to reduce this mischievous Commission to the impotence it really deserves ?"

Schleicher tried to make clear to the Old Gentleman that he had no legal handle against the Com-



"ASEV" DIELS  
Political Officer in the Prussian Ministry under Severing.



mission, that any step against it by the Government would mean beyond question a plain violation of the Constitution to which the President and the Chancellor had solemnly sworn their allegiance. Besides, he could not regard it as his duty to hush up the abuses which had obviously occurred in the distribution of the East Relief Fund.

Hindenburg interrupted furiously : "Abuses ? I tell you that everything that the newspapers have said about it is lies from beginning to end ! It is the duty of the State to help the large land-owners, who have been ridden to death by Marxist Governments. If we have no large-scale farms, we'll never be able to feed ourselves in case of war !"

The Chancellor did his utmost to demonstrate the error of his views to the Old Gentleman, who had now talked himself into a towering rage. Without success ; Hindenburg would not listen to him. And kept on repeating the question whether Schleicher was prepared to disband the Enquiry Commission appointed by the Reichstag. When Schleicher declared that he was not in a position to do so, Hindenburg replied : "If Hitler were Chancellor he would give me a different answer !" Then he turned his back on General Schleicher without saying good-bye.

On the top of all this Herr Hitler to-day sent his ambassador, Papen, to enquire whether Schleicher was prepared to receive the leader of the National Socialists. Schleicher said yes ; but Hitler must ask in person. Thereupon Papen drifted away shrugging his shoulders.



*21st January, 1933.*

At the sitting of the Senior Council of the Reichstag there was a sensation to-day. Herr Frick, the spokesman of the Nazis, got up at the beginning and proposed, to everybody's surprise, that the Reichstag should not meet until the 31st of January. The proposal was passed by the solid block vote of the Right Wing and the Centre. Only the Social Democrats and the Communists voted against.

Strange, this change of front by the Brown brethren. Hitherto they've scarcely been able to wait for the opening of the Reichstag. For us a signal of danger, anyway; it seems that more things have been going on behind the scenes than we knew. And than we can afford.

For to-morrow, Sunday, the Nazis have planned a march past the Communist Party headquarters in the Bülowplatz. In his capacity as Reichs Commissioner for Prussia, Schleicher instructed the Minister for Home Affairs to prohibit this scandalous act of provocation. But the Hitlerites did not give in, and sent Papen to intervene with Hindenburg. And Hindenburg ordered us, without even giving us a chance to state our case, to authorize the march of the Brown Shirts and "protect them with drawn swords against the Marxian rabble".

Schleicher raged, and threatened to hand in his resignation at once. He was not in a position to answer for such a step. This protest did not make the slightest impression on Hindenburg; "My orders must be obeyed!"

*22nd January, 1933.*

It isn't the fault of the Nazis, God knows, that the affair in the Bülowplatz has ended without bloodshed. On the contrary, they did all they could to provoke clashes. The discipline of the workers was admirable. If the Communists had let fly then, not a Brown Shirt would have escaped alive.

To-day delegates from the trade unions were with Hindenburg. He "promised" his help. Besides, they could depend upon it that he would rather die than break his oath of allegiance to the Constitution.

The campaign against us is still going on merrily. Schleicher is still hesitating. To-morrow he is to see Hindenburg.

*23rd January, 1933.*

At the beginning of his to-day's interview with Hindenburg, Schleicher asked whether he still enjoyed the confidence of the President. And when the Old Gentleman replied in the affirmative, Schleicher put forward the plan decided upon by us yesterday : that is, to declare a state of emergency, dissolve the Reichstag and hold no new election for the time being.

To Schleicher's surprise, Hindenburg declared his agreement, but made the condition that the Chancellor should rely more than heretofore on Hugenberg's party and the Steel Helmets, and in due time enlarge the Cabinet in that direction. Schleicher countered by asking whether Hugenberg, then, would consent to this solution ; Hindenburg said yes. He had spoken with Hugenberg several times during the past few

days, and Hugenberg was prepared to collaborate if the National Socialists were given no representation in the Cabinet.

The "state of emergency" will be proclaimed on the 31st of January, shortly before the opening of the Reichstag.

I'm horrified at Schleicher. Now he suddenly wants to turn to the Right again! He surely can't expect that anyone will have any faith in his political leadership now! The "state of emergency" means, in practice, the suspension of the Constitution, but by no means a way out of the mess yet. He should make up his mind definitely to get down to the job!

*24th January, 1933.*

The lid has been put on the whole situation! To-day the committee of the Hugenberg party met and demanded "Schleicher's resignation" because of his "Marxist" policy. A new Government should be formed. Without Schleicher, naturally.

And yet Hindenburg said only yesterday that he had come to an agreement with Hugenberg; more, that Hugenberg wished to enter our Cabinet as Minister of Industry! A disgusting mix-up!

*25th January, 1933.*

With his deplorable vacillation, Schleicher has gradually lost everybody's sympathy. The whole Press either fulminates against us or laughs at us, according to its political complexion. Hindenburg is furious at Hugenberg, who has "disavowed" him:

and he keeps his distance from the Nazis, whose "impudent and lying tongues" no longer please him.

The reek of gunpowder is in the air. One has the feeling that there must be an outburst at any moment. The Brown Shirts are swaggering threateningly in every street. And we behave as if we were living in the profoundest peace. Exactly as Braun and Severing did in the July of last year.

I have urgently advised Schleicher to concentrate a few reliable regiments of the Reichswehr round Berlin, so that we may be prepared for all eventualities. He does not want to go the whole way with me there, but he has not given his unconditional refusal either. So all hope is not yet quite lost.

The "Bolshevistic" proposal is to be voted on by the Commission of Enquiry into the East Relief Fund to-morrow. That may put the lid on it. If need be, we shall dissolve the Reichstag. We have already received plenary powers from the President.

*26th January, 1933.*

It has turned out as it was bound to do : the Commission of Enquiry has to-day concluded its deliberations and passed the offending motion by an overwhelming majority. Long live "Bolshevism" !

Otherwise everything is curiously quiet and peaceful ; one might think all was in the best of order.

Schleicher is irresolute. He would dearly like to take the plunge, and yet cannot find the pretext. But I have had one piece of success : four infantry

regiments are coming to Berlin. By to-morrow morning early they will have arrived.

*27th January, 1933.*

Herr Hitler has attempted another nice little stroke. The day before yesterday he sent his friend Goering to the President, who told the Old Gentleman that the National Socialists were prepared to prevent the vote being taken on the "Bolshevist" motion in the Commission of Enquiry if Schleicher were dismissed and Hitler appointed as Chancellor. Hindenburg (quite against our expectation!) showed the respected Herr Goering the door. There is really something "beautiful" and "sublime" in the faith of these Brown Shirts in their convictions! To get the post of Chancellor for their chief, they are prepared to sell their whole programme with an airy gesture.

Anyway, the Harzburg "friends" are giving each other what-for again. Hugenberg is intriguing against Hitler, Hitler against Hugenberg. And both in common against Schleicher. But Papen stands, as ever, "above party", and plays the one off against the other.

Sitting of the Senior Council of the Reichstag. It has been decided unanimously, against the opposition of the Hugenberg crowd, that the Chancellor shall make a statement on the whole question of the East Relief Fund to the Reichstag on the 1st of February.

*28th January, 1933.*

Schleicher has resigned! If he shows himself a man now, then the way is open for us!

He was summoned to Hindenburg early this morning. The President asked him if he had read the decision of the Senior Council, according to which the Chancellor would have to make a public statement to the Reichstag upon the East Relief Fund. Schleicher said yes ; it was one of the incontrovertible rights of parliament to demand such a statement.

Then Hindenburg desired to know whether the Chancellor was prepared to make that statement ; Schleicher replied that he was not justified in refusing it. The statement could be postponed by dissolving the Reichstag ; but he, the Chancellor, was convinced that the people's representatives would persist in bringing up the matter again and again. However, if the President wanted the affair to be hushed up for the present, then he, as Chancellor, requested plenary powers to dissolve the Reichstag. Three months or so could be won in that way.

At these words Hindenburg rose to his feet and struck his walking-stick on the floor : "If you aren't strong enough to put a stop once and for all to these argumentations about the plain duty of the State towards agriculture, then I shall not empower you to dissolve the Reichstag, but ask you to resign instead. This pretence of governing has long ceased to have any point !"

Schleicher turned pale as death and tendered his resignation, at the same time announcing the forthcoming resignation of the whole Cabinet. A curt bow was his answer. It was over. They did not shake hands.

In the anteroom he encountered Papen, who stared after him with interest.

Half an hour later it was announced on the wireless that Schleicher had resigned, and that Papen had been offered and had accepted the task of forming a new Government.

In the afternoon the leaders of the Socialist and Catholic Trade Unions were with us. Schleicher gave them an account of what had happened and asked whether the trade unions were prepared to declare a general strike against a Hitler or Papen Government and carry it out with the help of the Reichswehr. One of them asked whether the new Government that was to be brought to birth by the general strike would carry through the programme of the trade unions, in so far as it represented their joint postulates. Schleicher replied in the affirmative. Thereupon the representative of the Christian Trade Unions declared that he was resolved to join us. Leipart, the representative of the Red Trade Unions, had scruples; Schleicher's plan of action meant beyond doubt a break with the Constitution. Consequently the whole question was not only a political, but also a juristic one; he must ask for time to think it over. He could not take part in a Government which a legal verdict could depose from power and deprive of its functions next day. He, Leipart, did not wish to imply by that that he refused his collaboration, but he would have to think the matter over quietly and discuss it with his colleagues.

To-morrow, early, Schleicher and I journey to Potsdam. To consult with the officers of the regiments.

*29th January, 1933.*

In Potsdam a splendid and confident spirit reigns. The men are ready for anything. Now everything depends on Schleicher, if he will only press the button at the right moment.

The apprehensions roused in us by Leipart's indecisive attitude have been dissipated. "St——", who was with us in Potsdam, assures us that the workers will support us to the last man if Schleicher and the Reichswehr summon a general strike against Hitler and Papen.

There is only one thing that I don't like. Papen's efforts, which we have been watching with the eye of a hawk, seem to be in danger of shipwreck on Hitler's greed. He once more wants all or nothing! A dictatorial Cabinet in which only Nazis will be represented; and, of course, after that the dissolution of the Reichstag without a new election.

I'm of the opinion that Schleicher should strike now! At this very moment, while his opponents are at variance and disunited. But he hesitates and is afraid that he will have no effective rallying cry while it is not "definitively" known what Cabinet is to be formed. What meaning has "definitive" at this time of day? It's clear enough that it will be an ultra-Right Cabinet, with Hitler or Papen or Hugenberg at its head.

This accursed irresolution may yet cost us dear! Too many people already know of our preparations.



*30th January, 1933.*

It's all over ! Hitler has been appointed Chancellor !

The others smelt a rat, and in a panic hastily agreed among themselves. Hugenberg sits in the new Cabinet side by side with Papen. Blomberg, too, has naturally not been omitted. A fine team !

Schleicher is broken to pieces. In his despair he tries, but without any convincing success, to play the martyr. After all, he must admit that his "labours" for many years have in large measure themselves helped to cook this mess.

He had once more all the chances on his side. But he did not dare to take the plunge. He could not make up his mind, even though the others were already attacking. He waited and shilly-shallied, and shilly-shallied and waited. And with an almost tragi-comic obstinacy drove the cart into the ditch !

But to feel himself as a Napoleon, that was a feat he managed all right !

All in all, never has a so-called "revolutionary" in the whole history of the world insinuated himself into power in a more wretched fashion than Herr Hitler.

And the Old Gentleman ? Only a few weeks ago he told everybody who cared to listen that Hitler was not even capable of being Postmaster-General.

And to-day he delivers the whole German people to the knives of the Brown butchers.

In the year 1806 a Prussian major was sentenced by court-martial to death. He had delivered the

fortress of Spandau into the hands of the advancing French Army without being pressed and without striking a blow. That man was Paul von Beneckendorff und von Hindenburg.

World history and the history of noble families conspire to produce strange parallels !